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AUTHOR Rominger, Duane A.; Dillon, Brenda M.
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ABSTRACT

This report presents the opinions of the public on aspects of vocational and technical education in Minnesota as expressed in two public hearings. The report begins with an introduction that states the purpose of the public hearings and describes the format of the two meetings--one in the Twin Cities and one in Duluth. The following section is a compilation of comments from those hearings. These comments are grouped into the following questions that were addressed: the current and future state of secondary vocational education; the current and future state of postsecondary vocational education; strategies for developing an education and employment transitions system in Minnesota; the success of the 1990 Carl D. Perkins Act in increasing the participation of students from special populations in vocational education; and the future role of the State Council with respect to vocational and technical education research, evaluation, and policy analysis. After this, two sections contain the testimony at the meetings: 5 individuals at the Duluth and 14 at the Twin Cities public hearing. The final section contains written testimony from witnesses at the hearings in the form of seven letters and submitted written material that did not overlap the verbal testimony. The public forum questions are appended. (YLB)

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ED 385 753

# State Council on Vocational Technical Education

STATE OF MINNESOTA

# The 1995 Public Hearings of the State Council

# Full Report

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**366 Jackson Street, Suite 314, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 • TEL: 612/296-4202 • FAX: 612/297-7786**
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# The 1995 Public Hearings of the State Council

August 1995

Prepared by Duane A. Rominger
and Brenda M. Dillon

State Council on Vocational Technical Education
366 Jackson St., Suite 314
St. Paul, MN 55101

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The Council wishes to thank the many individuals who shared their time, experience, and expertise with the Council in these public hearings. It is through such testimony that the Council is able to align its workplan with the current and future needs of vocational and technical education in Minnesota.

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the Public Hearing

Each year, the State Council on Vocational Technical Education holds a public hearing to provide an opportunity for the public to express its opinions on aspects of vocational and technical education in the State of Minnesota. The State Council is mandated by Title I, Part B, §112c of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 to hold at least one public hearing per year.

During the past several years, the State Council has used a town meeting format to satisfy the requirement for a public hearing. In 1993, secondary vocational students, their teachers, and parents were invited to attend an all-day town meeting to consider the needs of secondary students with respect to their schools. In 1994, a group of postsecondary students, instructors, and staff met to consider the needs of technical college students. The themes that arose from these town meetings were summarized and discussed in two Council reports (Dillon & Kilpatrick, 1994; Rominger & Dillon, 1995), both available from the Council office.

## The 1995 Public Hearings

For 1995, the Council determined that it would be beneficial to return to a public hearing format in an effort to ensure that a wide range of individuals had an opportunity to express their opinions and comments to the Council. Plans were made to hold two public hearings—one in the Twin Cities and one in Duluth—in an effort to gain more input from interested citizens throughout greater Minnesota. Seventeen cable commissions and ten newspapers from across Minnesota were contacted with requests to publish or air the announcement of these meetings.

In addition, notices of the public hearing were sent to all secondary vocational directors, administrators and consortia contacts, and all technical college campus presidents. The Council staff also notified state-level administrators in secondary vocational education and lifework development, state-level administrators in postsecondary vocational education, labor and professional organizations, parent and student groups, and public policy organizations.

With each of the notices, and to anyone who called expressing an interest in the public hearings, a list of questions was submitted to help direct testimony toward areas of concern to the Council (see Appendix). These questions addressed:

- The current and future state of secondary vocational education
- The current and future state of postsecondary vocational education
- Strategies for developing an education and employment transitions system in Minnesota
- The success of the 1990 Carl D. Perkins Act in increasing the participation of students from special populations in vocational education
- The future role of the State Council with respect to vocational and technical education research, evaluation, and policy analysis

The two public hearings differed in style and content. Due to the short time between the announcement of the public hearing (mid-April) and the actual event, participation in the Duluth hearing on May 2, 1995, was somewhat light. Five persons testified. As a result of both the number and the intermittent arrival times of these individuals, there was a considerable amount of interaction between the Council members present and the witnesses. This hearing was more informal and conversational than the May 24 hearing in the Twin Cities, as the transcript indicates. Two witnesses were interested in the work and mission of the Council and some time was taken by the Council members and staff in describing these. During the testimony of two witnesses, there was a general discussion of the possible directions that future federal vocational and technical education policy may take. Most of the testimony was 30 to 45 minutes in length.

Announcement of the public hearings resulted in such strong interest in the Twin Cities that testimony was limited to ten minutes per witness to accommodate all participants. Fourteen individuals testified during the three hours of this public hearing. Their testimony was brisk, to the point, and there were very few questions from the Council members present. Though these two hearings differed considerably in style, the combined transcripts contribute a wealth of information for the Council to consider in its deliberations concerning its next biennial workplan.

In addition, the Council received written testimony in the form of seven letters and considerable written material from witnesses at the hearings. All letters submitted to the Council office have been included in this report. Because of the size of this report, due in large part to the transcripted material, only that submitted testimony which did not overlap the verbal testimony is included. Some third-party materials, such as newspaper articles submitted by the witnesses, were also excluded due to space constraints.

# Compilation of Comments

## General Comments

- Americans are becoming increasingly disenchanted with their publicly-funded education systems.
    - Charter schools, home schooling, and voucher systems are all symptomatic of this trend.
    - Private sector education and job training are becoming stronger.
- Every child that is born is going to be a member of a community and will eventually work for a living. Our educational system needs to be rationally designed to prepare children for these two roles.
- In the opinion of many of the witnesses, block grant funding—as opposed to categorical funding—will likely be the mechanism by which the federal government will support education and job training during the next few years. This will result in less money to each state, but will also involve fewer reporting and accountability requirements.
- The United States is in a period of transition in which a massive de-jobbing of the U.S. economy is occurring. By de-jobbing, we mean that workers can no longer expect secure employment with a single organization for long periods of time. One-third of current U.S. workers are temporary, contingent, contractual, or freelance workers. Manpower, Inc. is now the largest employer in the U.S. Some economists are predicting that jobs in the manufacturing sector will drop to 2% of the labor force. Work, as we know it, is vanishing.
- Vocational education will survive only to the extent that it is part of a broader education reform agenda.
- Schools will never have enough money to buy the latest technology and stay current with changes in the equipment in the field. If industry and business really want students with skills on state-of-the-art equipment, they are going to have to make that equipment available for training purposes.

# Secondary Vocational Education

## The current condition of secondary vocational education

- Fiscal and public support for secondary vocational education has been very weak, if not hostile, in recent years.
- Subjects in secondary education are not connected to each other or the real world of work and community.
- There is effectively a two-track system in secondary education— preparation for four-year college and preparation for everything else. Despite recent initiatives, this system continues to persist.
- There are two divergent groups of students coming out of high school:
    - those with the interest and skills to succeed in postsecondary education, whether technical colleges, community colleges, or four-year institutions, and
    - those who are not interested in further immediate schooling and/or who will have difficulty benefitting from postsecondary education without extensive and expensive remediation.
- There has been some increase in the use of federal funds to support secondary vocational education in Minnesota in the last two years, due to an increase in the proportion of Perkins funds dedicated to secondary vocational education. However, this change has had little effect at the local level thus far.
- Some licensing requirements have had a negative impact on the ability of local school systems to hire qualified instructors.
- The closing of the vocational cooperative centers over the last twenty years has had a negative effect on the availability of secondary vocational education programs.

## The future of secondary vocational education

- There has been a recent renewal of secondary vocational education through such initiatives as tech prep, school to work, and youth apprenticeships.
- All secondary education must begin teaching the SCANS skills within and across the curriculum.
- The most promising model for secondary education in the future includes the full integration of academic and vocational subjects through the use of applied academic courses and academic content in vocational courses.
- Secondary students will be or should be taught to expect cycles of continuing education and training throughout their careers.
- For the foreseeable future, secondary vocational education is unlikely to receive an increase in fiscal support and may receive fewer funds.
- The community must become part of the education venue.
- Secondary vocational educators will be part of cross-disciplinary instructional teams which work with cohorts of students for extended portions of the school day for more than a year at a time.
- Secondary students must be taught that they are and will be individual economic forces within their communities.
- Public school students need more career awareness and exploration activities and these should begin at a younger age than they are now.
- All students should take part in vocational education.
- Minnesota should consider a return to secondary vocational education cooperative centers.
- Students must be taught the instructional content referred to as *All Aspects of the Industry* in the Perkins Act.

# Postsecondary Vocational Education

## The current condition of postsecondary vocational education

- Technical colleges are serving an increasingly diverse population:
  - recent and not so recent high school graduates, many of whom need remedial education to succeed in postsecondary vocational education,
  - adults in transition for a wide range of reasons, and
  - working adults who need to upgrade skills or learn new skills for their present jobs.
- Remediation is needed by a wide range of technical college students in order for them to successfully complete their programs.
- With the merger and the consolidation of the co-located technical and community colleges, Minnesota is finally moving toward the comprehensive community college system model for postsecondary vocational education, a model already in use by approximately 85% of the states in the U.S.
- The implementation of program evaluation processes, involving standards and measures, has been very successful.
- Articulation and advanced-standing transfer agreements involving secondary, postsecondary (two-year), and four-year colleges and universities are growing at an exponential rate across the state of Minnesota.
- Schools exist to teach the basics. If they don't have the materials and can't afford the materials to teach the basics, they can't teach the basics.

## The future of postsecondary vocational education

- The movement toward a comprehensive community college system model will be completed.
- Adults will cycle in and out of postsecondary vocational education throughout their careers. Many will eventually seek further training in four-year institutions.
- Postsecondary vocational education is financially incapable of always maintaining state-of-the-art equipment for all programs. It must find a way to train students on such equipment through the use of internships and other work-based learning in partnership with business and industry.
- As with secondary vocational education, postsecondary vocational education is unlikely to receive more fiscal support from either the state or federal government and may receive less. This will result in a growing increase in net tuition costs to students.
- The use of distance learning should be increased as a means to deliver more services for less money.
- The postsecondary system needs to ensure that evaluation of postsecondary vocational programs continues to follow a process improvement model, not a compliance monitoring model.
- The instructional content of students' programs must include *All Aspects of the Industry*, as it is referred to in the Perkins Act.

# An Education and Employment Transitions System in Minnesota

- Secondary and postsecondary vocational education must become part of a single, seamless, rationally-designed lifelong learning system.

- Secondary and postsecondary students must learn that they will be resonating between education and work throughout their careers.

- Articulation and advanced-standing agreements are growing quickly. There needs to be recognition and acceptance of the proposition that multiple upward routes to the acquisition of the same skills are all appropriate if the outcomes to the individual and society are equal.

- All education must have real world connections through curriculum and experience, and it must be rigorous.

- Any design of an education and employment transitions system must not overlook or abandon solid educational reforms that are just now beginning to mature. Tech prep is perhaps the best example of this.

- A large segment of the population can not afford to spend years at a time without income while upgrading their skills or learning new skills in educational settings. Any education and employment transitions system must take their needs into account as it is being designed.

- Staff from Economic Security believe that the Education and Employment Transitions Council (EETC) will become part of the Governor's Workforce Development Council (the old Governor's Job Training Council). Staff from the Minnesota Department of Education believe that the EETC will become part of the new Department of Children, Family, and Learning.

- Planning for the education and employment transitions system in this state has too often and too long involved the participation and input of a very homogenous group of state-level people.

- Both secondary and postsecondary clients must be prepared, emotionally and with career skills, for a labor marketplace that involves short job tenure unconnected to how well the employee is doing his or her job. As these individuals enter the market, they can not expect secure employment with a single organization for long periods of time.

# Vocational and Technical Education for Special Populations

- Continued categorical aid for special populations is needed. A loss of specific categorical support will have a large negative effect on work experience and disadvantaged and handicapped programs. Support for special populations should be increased, rather than decreased.

- Due to cycles in fiscal policies and capabilities, transition services for special populations are the last support services added and the first ones to be cut.

- The cycle time from training to initial employment must be shortened for dislocated workers and welfare recipients. A solution must be found to support these persons during their first few successive cycles of work and training.

- Sex equity programs for students considering non-traditional careers have been very successful.

## Comments specific to correctional education

- Problems attendant to teaching the affective side of vocational and technical education to the correctional population are harder to solve than the problems attendant to teaching the technical skills.

- During the past seven years, state-operated adult correctional facilities have developed strong working relationships with postsecondary vocational education institutions. Pine City and Minnesota Riverland technical colleges actually have campus branches at Moose Lake and Faribault correctional facilities, respectively. In both instances, enrollment in full year equivalencies (FYE's) at these correctional facilities rivals that at the main campuses of these technical colleges.

- St. Cloud Correctional Facility operates it own vocational programming with internal staff, but has advanced-standing agreements with several technical colleges across the state for transfer of credits to their programs.

- Due to an increasingly bi-modal distribution of available jobs in the labor market—most available jobs call for either low-skilled or very high-skilled applicants—the Department of Corrections may have to make some adjustments in its program offerings, including the establishment of an A.A.S. degree track within the schools operated by the Department of Corrections.

- Course completion is very low in all correctional education programs, including postsecondary vocational education. The Department is considering several possible solutions to this persistent problem, including the duplication of programs across the system to promote completion even after institutional transfer, which is common.

- Transitional services for correctional clients are rare and still in their infancy.

## The Future Role of the State Council

- The Council should advocate for a K-12 career orientation and exploration system.
- The Council should be a guiding force toward proactive vocational education policies, rather than reactive policies.
- The Council should function as a learning organization by practicing strategic listening to a wide range of stakeholders and by constantly scanning the environment, looking far down the road for needs and solutions.
- The Council should continue with its research and development activities. This function fulfills a niche with respect to vocational and technical education in Minnesota that is otherwise unoccupied.
- In considering its evaluation activities, the Council should adopt a process improvement approach, rather than a compliance/monitoring approach.
- The Council should increase its coordination with other agencies in planning and executing its research and development activities.
- The Council should spread some good news about vocational and technical education.
- One possible avenue for study is the plight of the 5,000 middle managers who have been laid off in the past few years in the local area and not replaced.

### Books recommended to the Council in testimony

Cetron, Marvin & Gayle, Margaret (1991). *Educational renaissance: Our schools at the turn of the century*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Davis, Stan & Botkin, Jim (1994). *The monster under the bed: How business is mastering the opportunity of knowledge for profit*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rifkin, Jeremy (1995). *The end of work: The decline of the global labor force and the dawn of the post-market era*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

# Duluth Public Hearing
# May 2, 1995

Present for the Council were: Dale M. Neppel, Council Member
Alvin T. Huff, Council Member
Rhoda D. Robinson, Council Member
Eric C. Crane, Council Intern
Duane A. Rominger, Senior Planner

## Gene Christiaansen, Vice President of Instruction, Duluth Technical College

I think I would like to start out with a brief explanation of my background so that you have a little bit better understanding of where I've been and my perspectives. I started out in Wisconsin as an instructor and taught for three years before going into curriculum coordination and then into campus administration for a period of about 12 years. I moved to the state of Montana and served as a state director for a period of eight years in Montana; so I got to work very closely with the Council. They had offices right across the street from mine. As a matter of fact, I could look out my window right into their window. Then I went to Oregon and served as the Executive Director for the Oregon Vocational Association. And consulted, doing evaluations for tech prep at five community colleges before returning to the Midwest, Southwest Minnesota, to be the president of the Canby Campus. Then Harold Erickson—in only the way that Harold Erickson can convince people—talked me into coming up to Duluth to serve as his industrial division dean, which I served for two years before I became the acting—and that's what my position is—Vice President of Instruction. So that's the background.

As you talk about vocational education, I think typically, at the secondary level with the states I am familiar with—and that's Wisconsin, Montana, Minnesota, and Oregon—since the *Nation At Risk* [Report], vocational education has been in dire straits. Actually, I just spent some time on the phone with some people back in Montana and the superintendent was even thinking about eliminating agricultural education in Montana. So, it's still under attack. I think perhaps because of some old images of vocational education that are still with us today, it's become one of those easy targets, because everybody and his brother that happens to be my age or older has gone through one or two of those vocational education courses way back when and remembers that as the delivery mechanism. And indeed we never told the story sufficiently to change that perspective. And those people are basically the power brokers of today. So, it's not so much the young people that are saying it as those people that are in positions of decision-making. So I think there is an issue there. I think that vocational education, in total, has experienced a downtrend.

It has come back a little bit with some different directions, funded primarily with the '84 Perkins Act and then the Amendments of 1990, dealing with tech prep and then of course the presidential emphasis on youth apprenticeship. But therein lies a difficult problem. When we speak of youth apprenticeship, as educators we know it as one approach. Labor, on the other hand, is associated with apprenticeship from 1635 and it is not the same kind of thing. So I think we have semantics problems in getting labor to support those issues in terms of youth apprenticeship. We need a different kind of terminology for that.

So, given the power brokers that still remember the way it was and the infusion of the youth apprenticeship that irritates some labor folks, I don't see a glowing horizon at this particular point.

You see in Duluth a tremendous support of vocational education now with our new superintendent and buildings are going up. Classrooms, and consolidation, moving away from the old private school up there—the Marshall School—into some new facilities, so I think there is some support here. The direction is definitely going to follow technology. I'm going back to about 1985 when the new directors funded a person in terms of principles of technology and a birth of principles of technology and then from there on through applied math, science, biology, and so forth. Those kinds of activities, I think, are going to be the future of the secondary technical education.

In general, I would say that here, as well as across the nation, secondary has to really focus in on the basic skills that were enumerated in the SCANS Report [*What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000*, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1991]. I think, in terms of the technical skills to be developed, it is appropriate that those be developed after the high school experience. That indeed those individuals that come to us from the high school need to have the basic skills in reading, in writing, computation skills, teamwork, and communications. And we don't see that. Frankly, we see people that are having a difficult time passing the ASSET Examination—which is an exam that our State Board is looking at and said we should be using—at a level that would identify them as being qualified high school graduates. So I guess my opinion would be that we need to focus in on two student bodies. One, clearly has determined by their own understanding of their strengths and concerns that they are not headed, at this particular point, towards postsecondary education. I think we have to deal with that particular population at the high school level. And the other is the technology people that clearly are looking at postsecondary. That includes the two-year institutions as well as the four-year.

I think we need to design curriculum that fits those two populations. And if it sounds like tracking, that's exactly what it is. It's 180 degrees; we go back to what it was when I was younger. You had the choice of two tracks. The vocational or the collegiate.

**Dale Neppel**: Are you saying that you think it's the responsibility of the technical college or community college now to have available to those students those remedial coursework and critical thinking coursework and decision making coursework, because they are not coming to us with that kind of stuff?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Do I think that we have to have it? That's reality, yes. Yes, I think we have to have—just like the university system has said for a number of years, that even those people who are going on for a four-year degree have to take remedial work. It's probably a damnation of our total secondary effort. Just recently my wife and I had a conversation and she was saying that some of

the folks where she works felt as though, now, college education, a bachelor's degree, is the equivalent of, maybe 20 years ago, a high school education. And that a Masters is now about where a BA was then. Kind of an interesting observation.

**Dale Neppel**: Wow.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Well look at the communications skills. Look at the computation skills.

**Dale Neppel**: Oh, there's no question. I see that on our campus. We are using not the ASSET, but the COMPASS, which is the computerized version, okay? And we bring those students in and they take this COMPASS and they sit down with the faculty person in their major of choice and they talk about it, get their questions answered, and we look at some of the skills of these recent high school graduates or high school seniors. Some of the scores they are coming to us with? We've got to spend some big time effort to get them up to speed.

**Gene Christiaansen**: It's true. And we have such a vast and diverse population that we are trying to address at the postsecondary level. We have those people that have gone through the system and carry with them the need for remedial work. We have those people that are in the current workforce that don't have computer skills or are completely illiterate in terms of the use of computers. And then we have those students that are coming through that had been punching computers since they were in the first grade, you know. So you have that wide range of people to address.

So I really think that we need, in this country, to home in on a curriculum that directs students—self-direction—and I don't know that we need to have, as years ago in the European model, somebody making the decision, through a test at the age of 12 or 13, that this is the direction that you should go. I think with today's sophisticated evaluation, we can find some of those geniuses that are very good at art through a different process, rather than just saying the art teacher said you should go to college or you should go to work painting signs.

**Eric Crane**: And should those two tracks be articulated so that it's easy to . . . Is it possible to make it so that you can hop from one track to another?

**Gene Christiaansen**: That question was asked probably 20 years ago and that led to the general curriculum. So we had a three-track system, then. Obviously, most people who were going to college wanted some flexibility to take some of those vocational courses and those in the vocational wanted the opportunity to take some collegiate courses and what did we end up with? A general track that didn't prepare anybody to do anything. So I guess I would resist that at this particular point and I would say—with the decision of the student, good counseling, good assessment, and discussion with the parents—that that should be a self-directed decision. But make a choice. That's what its about.

**Rhoda Robinson**: With the two tracks that you listed for the postsecondary training, do you think that the kid that is in that would be prepared for either technical training or a four-year?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Sure. If you look at the principles of technology—I don't know how closely you've looked at that—but if you look at that curriculum they were selling and still are selling. If you don't have a good base in algebra, then you're not going to get past that course. I mean it's

applied physics is what it is. So, I think, applied physics can be used no matter where you are. It's general knowledge just like computer skills.

**Rhoda Robinson**: So the preparation for a two-year institution or a four-year institution would be the same?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Could be. Could very well be.

**Alvin Huff**: Gene, the fact that you are not getting the population with the skills, is this forcing you into the two-track system?

**Gene Christiaansen**: No. I don't think that we [in the technical colleges] are going to have a two-track system as such. I am saying that the K-12 should have a two-track system in preparation for the postsecondary effort. I wish we only had a two-track system in postsecondary, but that's really not the case. I think we've got people, of course, in the old definition of vocational education and those that are looking for entry-level employment, apprenticeship training, as well as those upgrading and updating. We will always have those people with technology moving as fast as it is.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Well, I think increasingly—with the marriage of the community colleges—you'll have people who are in Superior College who are preparing for University study, I would think.

**Gene Christiaansen**: That will be true. The mission of that new Lake Superior College will be everything from transfer on through occupation preparation. So we'll have . . .

**Rhoda Robinson**: It's huge, . . . diverse, like never before, it seems.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Yes, in Minnesota, that's true. And it took us a long time in the Midwest to adopt that comprehensive community college model. But it is available for probably about 85 percent of the rest of the nation. Wisconsin and Minnesota have been hold-outs for a long, long time. South Dakota . . . of course you don't have the number of institutions that we have. The comprehensive community college model is replicated across the nation. We are slow to change. There's wisdom in that. Let them explore first and find out what the shortfalls are, then adapt or adopt.

**Rhoda Robinson**: So do you see more articulation between secondary and postsecondary, particularly between the community and technical colleges, because of the need to understand what the preparation is?

**Gene Christiaansen**: That's a very heartening aspect of the changes that are taking place nowadays. I think we have a very knowledgeable leader out there in Cloquet. Russ Schmidt has been working with the new consortium here in just Hermantown and Duluth, and there is greater articulation and interest in articulation, not only at the K-12 level but also with Bemidji State where they have sign-on with agreements across-the-board for programs to transfer. Once again, I think they have replicated an interest from another institution in the state to the east of us that said we would like to have your people, your graduates of the associate degree programs, come to our college and we will give them credit. Which is a wonderful experience. Because, when I was in Wisconsin, they said we won't accept your credits. And my graduates in Rice Lake Technical

College could go across the border to Minnesota and get them all taken care of. Now the tables have turned. Yes, articulation, I think, is looked at as everybody is looking at it. I think it can be a career path, with an articulated curriculum, beginning with getting the basics down there in terms of basic physics, basic math, communications, team building, and overall understanding of the industry, which I will come back to shortly. So that when they come into the postsecondary setting, we've got a pretty good grasp of what they are getting into. And let me go back to that aspect of industry which is part of the federal legislation. When that law was passed, state leadership was required to develop a course called *All Aspects of Industry* and that has never been done in this state or probably in a lot of states, but . . .

**Rhoda Robinson**: Which law was that?

**Gene Christiaansen**: The Perkins Act. If I chose the occupation called Accounting, then, as an accountant, I should know how accounting fits into the total aspects of the industry. How do I fit in the overall scheme of things from product conception all the way through marketing, sales, and evaluation and re-design. We've never done that. And I brought that to the attention of Mel [Johnson of the State Board of Technical Colleges] some time ago along with the fact that we did not have technical committees, which were required as of 1984. In recent years we've had some technical committee activity. But the reason it seems that we are in that legislation is because there was a need and there was a strength to be drawn from those things and sometimes we forget them. That's a kind of a criticism of our lack of looking at the curriculum development potentials, mandated expenditures, and a lot of professional development under the Perkins Act.

Where are we going on the postsecondary level? Hopefully, we'll get to the understanding of micro and macro economics, so that the person will be able to understand global perspective, rather than just the internal workings of this country and a worker here will be able to understand why a German machinist can compete and a Japanese machinist can compete, so that they can make the changes, so they can become more competitive. I think it's extremely important for us to understand that we are not in this alone anymore, just in this country. I often compare that to our internal competition to what I saw in another state, Montana, in that we just kind of moved money around in the state of Montana. We never had a lot of money coming in from the outside. That's the only way you have growth. Consider that same perspective with this country. We can move the money around or we can print the money. But unless we have new money coming in, we're not going to have growth. And that's something I don't think a lot of people are understanding, even at the technical college level. I think there is growth there in the technical area. I obviously read the same journals that you do and can quote the statistics, although they seem to be dropping now. It used to be 80 percent of those jobs in the future would require less than a Bachelor's Degree. Recently I've heard people say 70 percent of jobs will and then I am beginning to wonder where did the 10 percent growth come from? I believe it. I have four children out of college now, and only one working in the area in which she was educated. I think, years ago, if I would have pushed harder they would have gone to a technical college. But they all had that same aspiration that Dad had: to go to a four-year school.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Well, that and we program that in at most of our secondary schools, you know. If you are in school at all, that's what you are programmed to do. I think the understanding is that we all will need a liberal education as well as technical education. Every adult is going to need both in the future. We see our colleges are teaching some technical things as well as your technical schools needing to teach the other.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Yes. Special needs populations? I think the special needs have been with us since about 1976. That was probably the origin of the special populations set-aside in that legislation. And it's appropriate today as well as it was back in 1976. There still is a disparity and that's hard to believe. It's only about 70 percent of what the males are making in the same work classifications. We still haven't bridged that gap. So, in terms of the handicapped and disadvantaged, I don't know what the federal government is going to do. What's going to happen with ESEA [Elementary and Secondary Education Act] and the old Chapter I & Chapter II? I don't know. If those funds are not available, who will address that? The new vocational education?

What should it look like five or ten years from now? An articulated curriculum from the 11th grade on through the 16th grade. And I would hope that we don't have the competition. That comes from a historic perspective of mine in which we had accounting students in Rice Lake taking our accounting classes using the same text as the two-year center at the Barron County Campus right next door. They couldn't get credit for the very same text. So that's happening right here, too. Accounting is accounting is accounting, like a Ford is a Ford is a Ford. I don't care whether it's in Minnesota or whether it is in Florida. And assets and liabilities are the same. I would see a greater articulation in the future from K-12 on all the way through the completion of a Bachelor's Degree.

**Rhoda Robinson**: What do you think is going to push that to happen? I mean those of us in education see that as valid, but we keep getting the resistance.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Short-falls of dollars. Insistence on less duplication. And more education on the part of the participants of the system. In the past we've been able just to take "No" as an answer. Maybe starting with my generation. I began to ask why and my mother's response was "Because I told you so." It doesn't work today. We want to know. Everybody wants to know why. What's the rationale?

**Dale Neppel**: The big merger . . . that's the direction that it's going?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Yes.

**Dale Neppel**: The merging of systems? So that the accounting course at St. Cloud State is taught at St. Cloud Tech? Same textbook? Same person?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Yes.

**Dale Neppel**: And will it finally transfer?

**Gene Christiaansen**: Yes.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Now that does get to be ridiculous. Well, turf is what that has been termed.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Certainly. It's competition for legislative dollars on a formula basis. You pay by the FYE, or the FTE, or however you count them, and that's what it is. If I can generate the dollars to maintain my livelihood, I'll do that. If that means I have to have some differences, probably. But that's not necessarily customer-oriented or student-oriented.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Well, that's when we focus on maintaining our jobs as opposed to serving the customer. That's been a huge problem; if we can get that turned around, that's going to make a big difference.

**Gene Christiaansen**: It's happening. As I said, Russ Schmidt has got articulation going with Duluth. We have articulation going with Hermantown and Duluth. We have articulation with Bemidji State. I think we've received letters most recently from the folks at UMD [Univ. of Minnesota-Duluth]. No kidding! And they are interested in working some articulation agreements both in engineering and business. UWS [Univ. of Wisconsin-Stout] has always been open to that, of course, because their enrollment has been relatively small and they're a little more open.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Are you pursuing it with Scholastica? With the health care professions?

**Gene Christiaansen**: No. Scholastica is another one of those issues that may come.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Because we [Duluth] are such a center for health services, it just makes such a logical sort of sense, we can get that. The combination of industry and education, both four-year and two-year, are here. We all ought to be talking to each other.

**Gene Christiaansen**: It's going to be difficult for the health industry to respond to that, especially if you look at youth apprenticeship. If you have 70 people that are interested in youth apprenticeship with the consortium over at Cloquet and then your student graduates, not only from our college, but also Scholastica and UMD—pretty quickly the health facilities say "Wow, I have more students running around my floor than I have full-time staff." It's difficult to maintain control and flow and quality and everything else. That may be a problem that we have to face in the future.

**Rhoda Robinson**: But that's all the more reason for coordination among the institutions doing the training. So that you don't flood. You know we've run into that with secondary when we do job training, or whatever you want to call it, out in the community.

*There was a general discussion for a period of about 15 minutes during which those present speculated on federal legislation and the imminent merger of postsecondary education in Minnesota and their possible effects on vocational education. Mr. Christiaansen expressed some concern over the possibility of diluting the effect of federal vocational education dollars if money, allocated on a formula basis to the newly combined technical/community colleges, called the co-locates, was spread across the entire institution.*

**Gene Christiaansen**: . . . I guess I probably overstayed my time. I thank you for coming up to Duluth. Appreciate the effort. I would encourage you to take a look at keeping whoever the sole state agency is honest. That means working with an intern who will probably be able to coach you verbatim periods and comments and regulations so that someone can keep you apprised of what is and what is not correct. Should be a good job. And thank you once again for carrying the good message. Duluth always seems to be out there on the edge, demonstrating some things—not to say that Thief [River Falls] and the Old Six Pack, up in the Northwest, don't do that. They did, too. But it's nice to have you participate in that. And we decided that we are going to use the Perkins Act application, which then identifies programs from the strong down to those that are not quite strong as a basis for our technical assistance this next year and not go through all the formulate and derivation. It's already done.

**Duane Rominger**: Thank you.

**Alvin Huff**: Nice to meet you.

**Gene Christiaansen**: Good luck!

## Jim Anderson, Work Experience Coordinator, Duluth Public Schools

I am here as kind of a representative from Work Experience, Disadvantaged and Handicapped Group for my colleagues, [who] wanted to show up. I did bring some written information from one of my colleagues addressing some of the issues on the pages that we had been sent on Friday. I guess we've been concerned, number one, about the Carl Perkins funding and also addressing the issue of categorical aid. I understand that there are some real problems with categorical aid for maybe next year or the next couple of years. I think that that's a concern to all people in vocational education, whether it is the work experience, handicapped, disadvantaged, or just the plain vocational education programs. I think that's something that needs to be addressed. And I'm wondering where it is at this point. I talked to Jim Arndt [Duluth Public Schools Vocational Director] briefly on Saturday. I think he mentioned something to the effect that it had gone into the Senate and was being discussed at that point for the idea of possibly having the categorical aids for one more year and then the second school year they would no longer exist. I don't know, but that was what the group that I am representing was concerned about.

**Rhoda Robinson**: So the concern being that, if we don't have specifically identified vocational funds, then we won't have a vocational program?

**Jim Anderson**: Well, yes. Basically, that's the bottom line. I think that's the way it would be, of course, all over the state. Every year it seems like this categorical aid issue seems to be a big issue and it always comes up. I guess our concern is, let's try to put it into perspective where it will be there and we don't have to fight with it every year. That's another frustrating issue that occurs.

**Duane Rominger**: Where do you think the resistance to categorical aid comes from?

**Jim Anderson**: Well I'm not really sure myself, but, just listening to some of my colleagues, I guess I would have to say that we've been looking at it coming from specific legislative people within district, possibly some districts that don't have to worry too much about it. I really don't know to be really honest with you. I know of certain legislative individuals who—I don't know them personally, but I've heard their names mentioned—bring the issue up almost every year. And you know it's addressed to the Senate. I haven't been involved that close to address that at this point.

**Rhoda Robinson**: I think part of it is the whole system. I fear that voc ed and special ed get lumped in together. People start talking about categorical aids and they say, well, we just gave all the money to everybody. I'm worried about it more on a national basis, because I think Minnesota

at least makes an ethical effort to serve everybody. If you took categorical aids away from some of the other states I've lived in, it would be pretty bleak for certain populations.

*At this point, Mr. Anderson asked the Council members and staff what they had heard regarding federal funding for vocational education and there was a general discussion on the number and types of block grant funding that vocational educators might see.*

**Jim Anderson**: I think that's where a lot of people are running scared. It's the idea of everything coming into a block grant kind of situation. When I was at that MAVSNP [Minnesota Association of Vocational Special Needs Personnel] conference after those hearings.
Boy! The discussions from the people from the State Department, that's all they talked about was the block grant. How frightful that was.

*Mr. Anderson offered some written testimony from a colleague in the form of a letter. The Council members assured him that his comments and the letter would be entered into the record.*

**Rhoda Robinson**: What do you see coming five years down the line?

**Jim Anderson**: I've thought a little bit about it. I think we've made a lot of good improvements in secondary vocational education in Duluth. We're in the process right now of building a secondary technical center. We've added some good programs in technology. Looking at it from the career exploration and work experience side of it, I think we need to get more directly involved with business and industry—sharing their thoughts and ideas about what they expect students to know. I really feel that there's a lot of good information and a lot of very good ideas that come in from people who are presently in the workforce. I get involved by doing a lot of different field trips and tours through businesses and have people come in and talk about what they do. We can't be going out all the time, so we do have some people come in and talk about different things. I think, looking ahead, those are some of the things that we need to do, at least from the work experience aspect.

I think we need to look at making some adjustments in curriculum. I think we need to look at some new curriculum. Again, I'm not that familiar with a lot of the curriculum that's out there. I know that I have seen some catalogs with excellent stuff. We have some excellent outside resources that we can use to help us find curriculum. So I think, looking ahead, there are some things that we can do.

I think a lot of us are waiting mostly to see where all this is going to turn out in the end before we start trying to figure out how we are going to develop something new.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Thanks, Jim.

**Jim Anderson**: I appreciate the invitation.

## Robert Sanders and Bud Draeger, Members of the Minnesota Technical College Student Association and Students at Duluth Technical College

**Bud Draeger**: I guess our biggest concern is the students close to graduation, both potential employers and employees, and the fact that all we hear about are cuts. We are wondering, "Is this going to put us behind in technology as we are going to college?" I've already started a small accounting company; hopefully, it will start growing and I'll have to hire somebody. Naturally, I'll want that person up on all the technology. You hear Minnesota is one of the best in higher education, but they want to cut it. Basically, I don't understand. I guess that's my big concern. In five years are we going to be behind in technology because of all these cuts? The gentleman that was just here made some good points. Our campus is putting construction stuff up right now, because we are going to be merged with the community college, and it's doing some great work there. We've got some great programs, but is the funding going to be cut to where we're not going to have as good as quality instructors or programs or whatever?

**Rhoda Robinson**: I think the verbiage out there is that, as Duane said, we are not going to lose money overall in the service delivery, but we need your input to make a smarter use of the money. So being aware, as Gene Christiaansen earlier said, of what the regulations are and keeping people honest with what they are doing. I think the legislators are wanting us to look at the money differently. We need to do a better job, too, of advertising what we've done well: a good education, good technology, what's necessary and what's important. We need to be a lot more specific whenever we talk to legislators. We tried real hard with the State Council whenever we talk with folks from the State Board to be real specific. We need to stay up on technology. Have current computers. Whatever it is, very specifically what we need to do so that there is some understanding. So they know what we are doing, we are not just blowing in the wind.

*At Mr. Draeger's request, the Council Members and staff described the history and mission of the Council and its relationship with the Minnesota Department of Education and the State Board of Technical Colleges. In response to a question from Mr. Sanders on its mission after the consolidation of postsecondary education, the Council Members explained that the mission would likely remain the same, but the authority of sole state agency under the Perkins Act would transfer to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.*

**Dale Neppel**: I'd like to thank you for coming. I appreciate it. Going back to your question that you asked initially, was your concern with the level of technology that's going to be out there in the short run and our ability to educate the student and keep up. We are changing so rapidly right now in education, not just in Minnesota, but nationally. We are going to have to make some choices. I think that we are going to have to make some choices about what we can do and can't do and I really don't think it's a matter of being able to say we need more money. I think we're going to have to make some choices. This is what we've got. Now how are we going to do it? I don't like that necessarily, but I have been working through this change process. I work in a technical college in East Grand Forks as dean of students, so I'm part of the system and I'm seeing what's happening. I don't like it, but I don't think we can control it. My sense is we need to maintain a high quality level

of education that we are able to do and we may not be able to do everything that we've been doing. That's why we may have to make some choices.

**Bud Draeger**: Are you talking choices in vocational education as opposed to college?

**Dale Neppel**: What I am talking about is, "Are we going to have all the campuses we have?"

**Bud Draeger**: I don't think we would need them all.

**Dale Neppel**: Are we going to continue to try to educate all the careers we are doing right now? Maybe for some of those things we are going to have to say to industry, "We can't do that for you anymore. You are going to have to do that yourself." Or we can do that cooperatively, but we can't do it by ourselves.

**Duane Rominger**: Or individual campuses might end up specializing.

**Dale Neppel**: Maybe. At East Grand Forks, we've got about 1400 students this quarter. And about 65 percent of those students are health-related students. We've got 20 specific health majors with a common curriculum core. The students that come in and go a quarter or two before they even decide what they want to do.

**Bud Draeger**: More customized training type of thing?

**Dale Neppel**: More cooperative with business and industry, but I don't think we are going to be able to say, "We've got to have more money," because it isn't there. That's the bottom line.

**Robert Sanders**: What I see is from my background. I've been in the Marine Corps for seven years. I was in during Desert Storm, but I was in Okinawa, Japan, during that time. With the Japanese, business and education cooperates, and that is something that we have to look forward to doing. And the other thing that I see is this: During Desert Storm, the military newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, printed an article that said that the American government was doing more research on a troop, because the troop was still needed. They had thought that, when we went into Desert Storm, they could use their technology to get away from using the troops. And yet they still needed the troops to make it and they found out that it will come down to the bottom man actually being needed just as much as the pilot or the technology itself. So education can't stop in a technological field. It can't. We will need it.

**Rhoda Robinson**: And for everyone. I think that's an interesting research piece. No matter how great our technology is—sending the bombs 8,000 miles or whatever it is—you've got to have the guy on the ground. And he has to know where that bomb is going.

**Robert Sanders**: So it's from my point of view, I am in the diesel field. I am a diesel technician, and we are behind the times. We are just now getting up to par with the electronics, which have been out for at least seven years. We have a DDEC II [pronounced dee-deck, for Detroit Diesel Electronic Controls] from Detroit Systems. Detroit just put out a DDEC IV and it's already obsolete because they're working on a DDEC V. That's how fast it's growing. That's where we need cooperation with industry in order for the schools to even keep up. If we could get DDEC IIs or DDEC IIIs from industry and the computers to work on them. Cummins has a computer that—to doing anything

besides read parameters—costs over $5,000. I can't see a school purchasing that.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Particularly knowing that it is going to be obsolete in two years.

**Robert Sanders**: We need that partnership.

**Rhoda Robinson**: I think that's really vital.

**Alvin Huff**: I represent private industry councils and private industry is telling us day-in and day-out that you do not supply us with skills. They are going to have to come along in a partnership to make this happen. We need some dollars from private industry to make this happen, I think.

**Bud Draeger**: Private industry feels that the skills in personnel is not the quality they need.

**Robert Sanders**: Schools are there to teach basics. But if you don't have the material to learn the basics, how can you get there? You can't purchase it with tax dollars. I want vocational education because it is needed. It's the basis for everything. Cars don't run without a mechanic. Trucks don't move without a mechanic. Planes don't fly without mechanics. Nurses don't know what they are doing if they don't have the equipment to start with or know how to push the buttons to do the testing that they need to do. That's what I hear. I hear from med lab techs [medical laboratory technicians] that they don't have the equipment, that the instructors tell them that we can't give you the equipment that's needed. I've heard it all year long that they need the equipment. The instructors know what they are doing but the equipment that they have to work with is outdated.

**Rhoda Robinson**: I don't know how you could mark this on the tape, but I think that the statement that he just made is a real critical one. I want to repeat it for the record. "Schools are there to teach the basics. But if we don't have the materials and the school can't afford the materials to teach the basics, we can't teach the basics." And that's where that cooperation is real important.

**Bud Draeger**: I guess I'm probably in a different spot than Bob is because I've taught vocational. I am going to teach a customized course next year. And I can see, he's right, you know, that element of the basics is there. It can be there if everything is right. I taught truck driving here at DTC [Duluth Technical College]. We had some old clunkers, stuff that's not on the road anymore. We got it from private industry. I have to admit private industry doesn't want to give it up until it's too damn old for them to sell. So now we are right back at the beginning. We don't have the electronics, the computerized engines to show the driver what happens when you over speed or whatever. We've got an old truck.

**Rhoda Robinson**: I envision some kind of a process where we work with industry being willing to have students in there who can use the advanced equipment because they will help to teach them to use, or we bring in the instructor. I don't care what it is, but we don't need duplicate equipment. We can't have two $35,000 systems—one over there in the industry and one here in school—and them both having to replace them. I suppose the people who build those systems would like that, but we simply can't afford it. There has to be a system, and, as I understand it, in Germany the industries do have an obligation—it's more of a moral obligation than anything else—to take in students and interns.

**Bud Draeger**: Industry is just going to have to realize that this is the only way they're going to keep their quality at a high standard. I drove trucks for 18 years; I know the kind of drivers that are out there. We need to get some of these guys off the road. We need probably 15 percent of them off the road. And it's scary, it's scary. I came off the road three years ago and at that time I had driven somewhere in the neighborhood of two million miles, accident-free. I'm 54 years old; my reflexes aren't what they used to be. Yet there are guys out there 66, 65 [years-old] driving. They don't need to be out there. They need to take their future in their own hands and say, "Hey, I'm too damn old to do this anymore." I mean you've got the truck here in Minnesota and you've got to be in LA two days later. That's a long haul. I'm here to tell you, that's a long haul. And then they load you up with produce and they want you back in a day.

But we need to get more quality drivers out there. Now I'm in the accounting profession. I can see things that are not up to speed, something more that could be done on the classroom level. I've got a very, very good accounting teacher. Everything is electronic, but he teaches the old pen-and-pencil way. His idea is—and it's probably a good one—you are going to learn the basics of accounting better by doing it this way. But now we've got this man over here that teaches electronic bookkeeping—that course you've got to take. So you really are doubling up. Maybe we don't need that doubling up. There's very, very few accounting firms any more that say "Open your ledger and do your thing." It's all computer. That's where industry needs to come in and say, "Hey look, we don't have these pen and pencil things any more."

**Robert Sanders**: My future employer, I hope, is Interstate Diesel in Virginia. They came down to our job fair and I talked to them and they say "Well, your first job is going to be tearing down engines and you will be in that position for about a year at $7 an hour. Then we will start training you. You will start making $11 an hour at training." Now, I was happy with that. That sounds like a fair deal. But I couldn't understand. I just spent two years in school . . . in training.

And then again they want me to be able to do things their way, their industry needs. Caterpillar would hire—we did a tour with them this summer or this year. They said "We'll hire you at $10.63 and you would step right into training." Industry realizes that we don't have what it takes in school. I think they could cut their costs if they would cooperate with schools and have students ready to go when they graduate from school.

**Rhoda Robinson**: And I think that goes down to the 16-year-old kid. We could be doing a better job, but the thing that is lacking, as I see it from a high school perspective, is the time to do that. When you are running your accounting firm—I mean if you are going to make money—you can't take the time to spend three hours a month, one hour a week to talk with me, and plan where my students are going to go or how they are going to integrate with you, when we have no models to go on. But that's what it is going to take. Let alone they would release me from my students for one hour a week for me to go to talk to you. That's where we don't have any mechanism for doing that and that's the reason it can't be done under the current system. There is no time for communication, because we can't do that. Before your teacher has time to go and be with the Caterpillar people, there has to be a mechanism for it to be done.

**Bud Draeger**: Another truck driver and I put together a program to see if we can eliminate guys who buy trucks from going out of business in the first year and a half, two years. And that's what we are finding, you know. You want to take an hour and a half seminar. Who schedules a whole bunch of time in advance so that they can plan everything? That's what we are in the process of

doing. Industry is going to have to understand that they are going to have to do it. It's something that we've got to instill in them that this is as much for their welfare as it is for ours, or society's. It has to be a partnership.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Thank you for your time.

*More discussion occurred on the possible futures for vocational education and the changes expected from the federal government. Mr. Huff spent some time discussing the natural fear of change that many people have, but suggested that we are in for a time in which we are going have to learn to spend our money smarter.*

## Jim Arndt, Vocational Director, Duluth Public Schools

I did not know what to bring so I did make a number of photocopies of things that have been presented or that I've written or presented in the past, either at the legislature, in testimony, or at other various meetings related to secondary vocational technical education. What I would like to do today would be to present that material rather than restructuring it all or redoing it all. It's easier to take some of the highlights out and present it to you—what the concerns and issues are. Is that acceptable?

That's only the first packet. Basically, what I would like to do is highlight and answer any of your questions that you may have from your perceptions too, so stop me, interrupt me, whatever. To highlight the importance of the need for secondary vocational ed, I'll be addressing some of the questions that were included in the mailing.

This is information that has already been submitted to House Education Finance Committee in testimony down there. One of the things that I feel are important is that we ought to recognize the need for vocational technical education and the importance of it—not only to the local community, state, region, and nation, but also—from a perception of global economics. Few educators are more aware of the importance of teaching workplace know-how than those in vocational technical education. This comes out of the SCANS report. My comments hopefully will be supported by either research or other documentation, and not just be opinions.

Many of my opinions will be supported by the research and documentation. SCANS, Item No. 2, verifies that workplace know-how is extremely important and we're basing our education on competencies and the foundation for that. I'd like you to realize too, that No. 5 is extremely important and I believe that the vocational technical concept can take a form of a leadership role in advocating for secondary vocational, for articulation and integration of academics and technology, whether it be through tech prep or similar programs.

One of the things—and I believe it's a problem with the State of Minnesota—is the fact that many of us get on a bandwagon and when the new band comes into town, we switch bands. Reform based on tech prep is one of the most innovative and solid pieces of legislation and solid pieces of educational reform for many years to come along. Yet the State seems to be walking away from it, by now moving into youth apprenticeship and yet tech prep lays the foundation for building that

block. If we don't have a solid foundation, we'll end up undermining education as a whole. I don't know where you stand on that but that's one of my strong opinions.

There's been discussion and information on changing the educational formula. House Education Finance Bill 1299 supports categorical aid for special ed and vocational ed due to the higher service costs. The Senate bill is proposing to have one year of funding and then it rolls into block granting through general education, which becomes very discretionary at the local level. This has a real strong impact, potentially eliminating or reducing the services offered for special populations and then secondary vocational technical education. I believe as a Council, you could take a strong stance in support of MASVA [Minnesota Association of Secondary Vocational Administrators] and other organizations in advocating for the reinstatement of set-asides and categorical aids for vocational and special ed instead of their elimination. Without it, the potential is to eliminate vocational ed here in Duluth.

The loss of categorical aid funding will have an impact of almost a half a million dollars including work experience, disadvantaged and handicapped, and WECEP [Work Experience Career Exploration Programs] programs, along with the traditional vocational categorical programs. Those two combined would mean that I have to cut a half million out of our budget in the process. This would reduce over 30 percent of our current offerings in vocational technical ed. Since the research and documentation, national and state-wide, indicates a need to provide a skilled workforce with a technology base, this would be undermining some of our own advocacy and needs for global economics. What you see here in the documentation actually shows the secondary vocational without the work experience included. Work experience is about $200,000. That's where that half million dollars alone comes from.

The importance of vocational technical ed leadership and technology. Based on the Neglected Majority, Goals 2,000-Educate America Act, School to Work Opportunities [Act] and the Carl Perkins legislation, we provide leadership in technology as an integrated process. Not from the standpoint that, if I ask you what is technology, what is one word you would probably say? Define technology for me, or make a comparison. What is it?

*No answer from the people present.*

**Jim Arndt**: Normally this question is very easy.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Because we are avoiding saying computers, that's why. We know not to answer that.

**Jim Arndt**: Well that's what everybody thinks of and from my viewpoint . . .

**Rhoda Robinson**: We all know it is more complex than that.

**Jim Arndt**: . . . many of the educators look at technology as computers and when you walk into our vocational technical labs, we integrate computers and use a variety of different technologies—PT [Principles of Technology], applied physics, applied math, applied communications, auto mechanics, construction technology. Air-driven nailers, as an example, is a form of technology, rather than just the old hammer and arm. So there's many, many different examples. Synergistics Labs out at Lincoln Park uses robotics, electronics, broadcasting, and audio-visual. Computers are

incorporated in all of them. I believe some of the things that we are doing—in graphic arts, medical careers, marketing ed—all lend themselves to innovative technologies. Leadership in school to work initiatives, tech prep, youth apprenticeship—those are things that we stand for. I think that some of the things that I will present to you later on, you can support with research based on your own surveys.

What are the true needs? We, in vocational technical ed, need to be adaptive and changing. The idea and philosophy that we have taught it this way for 23 years does not hold water any longer. And what do we need to change and how do we need to change in licensure, funding and finances? Those get to be real difficult issues. It isn't a simple matter of saying "Oh, we're going to change." It's a matter of looking at licensure structures, educational . . . The grad rule, as it's been proposed, is an example. Basically we have 22 out of 66 standards that are addressed through secondary vocational education.

Vocational technical ed will no longer be the individual's building blocks of education. Math is extremely important. Communications, signs, technology and integrated technologies—we need to be able to integrate those through academics and prepare students for lifelong learning. We can accomplish through the programs we offer and through articulation with postsecondary institutions but we need to whether we are doing the correct thing for preparation and how far we should go with it?

Regarding leadership and career exploration and preparation. Nobody at the State Department, nobody to my knowledge in the State of Minnesota, has really advocated for a K-12 career preparation orientation process. Some of us in MASVA, as a group, advocate for that but with the licensure restrictions, you can't go in and be working with K-12. States such as Colorado and Maryland, as an example, do K-12 career preparation. They are not tracking students and that's not what I am advocating. It's a matter of orientation. There is an alternative in educational success besides the traditional four-year process.

Lois Fell is the newly-elected president of MASVA. I think we are a reducing group. They tell me that back in the late 80s, there were over 200 administrators in the state of Minnesota advocating for secondary vocational education. Now we are down to less than 50 members in a matter of a few years. Duluth public schools, as an example: When I started in '88 there were seven administrators. There are two of us now.

Leadership and gender equity in non-traditional career opportunities is another thing that we're doing. A pilot program—an all-girls pilot—with Lincoln Synergistics Labs here in Duluth is an example. The girls come in and talk with a female staff member. I'm trying to do those things—raise the awareness of gender equity in non-traditional career opportunities for both genders.

Transition services for special populations has been rather difficult here in Duluth, because every time we get it, we go through the hack and slash process. It gets more difficult and more difficult. Inclusion is very important and everybody can learn—provided the services—but yet we don't get the funding and support to do that. In some cases, what we advocate is not necessarily supported by research and it is viewed as opinion statements and gets difficult to argue against what other people want to do. There are a number of things that we can do. You may find that some of these

are areas that you, as a Council, can advocate for and work in partnership with MASVA or other organizations in meeting some of these needs.

Increasing academic requirements? All it does, the research indicates, is increase the drop-out potential and frustration of students and disciplinary problems. And there is a strong push to walk away from our elective areas and increase academics.

We also have some documentation related to Cetron and Gayle, from the book *Educational Renaissance* [*:Our schools at the turn of the century*, 1991]. The numbers are there and they are still supported beyond 1991 on the projections of the employability and job skill requirements. There's a number of other quotes regarding Berryman and the liaison bulletin from 1992. President Clinton's major challenge will be to set the United States firmly on the path of the high-skill, high-wage worker in the 21st century. You as a Council, I would believe, will have to identify what are those high skills and high needs going to be and how do we accomplish that. It will vary from community to community.

Regarding educational reform: We need to encompass all students, not just the haves, and avoid eliminating the have-nots or the neglected majority. We need to take a strong stance that all students should be involved. One of the areas I believe the Council can assist this State in is this: everything beyond the seventh grade in the State of Minnesota is treated as an elective area, subject to the slashing and the hacking of the budget reductions. It comes first out of the budget. This applies, not only to vocational ed, but also to special ed. Perhaps the Council could assist in advocating that vocational technical ed should become a requirement. I reflect back and look at when I was coming out of a Milwaukee area school, Muskego. I had to take vocational technical courses in high school. I think that has helped me tremendously, not just from my personal standpoint, but in my career. And now, today, so many students don't even get it in the State of Minnesota with only a 21 percent college graduation rate. We need to analyze what are we doing on the career preparation side.

The State said "Advocate for it and have a higher completion rate for colleges." But they may not have a higher completion rate at the high school level. Minnesota has become complacent because we have a high completion rate. We advocate and hope, but we forget about a year and two years beyond high school. What's the end product of that?

I also believe that we definitely have to prepare students. All students should be prepared for some form of postsecondary training, because 85 percent of jobs will require it and, in many cases, we are only looking at four-year baccalaureate programs without considering the other alternatives to success.

Also included in your packet, you can see technology, personal family life skills, business marketing and various other occupations—where we impact on the graduation rule.

When we talked about the scope and sequence and things, are we really planning high school or what is going on in high school? Are we asking them the question, "Are you planning to go to college?" when we really should be asking, "What kinds of careers are you planning to pursue?" I think that would be the better terminology.

**Rhoda Robinson**: The four-year colleges would appreciate that, too. When kids just go to college

without any clue as to what they are there for, it makes college tough, too.

**Jim Arndt**: Sooner or later, virtually everyone seeks employment. I think the Council may be aware that there's been a division and it's split between secondary and postsecondary. We potentially impact 100 percent at the secondary level of all students in the State of Minnesota. Yet we get a very small fraction of the Carl Perkins funding. Whereas the technical colleges impact a small percentage of the total student population and get the lion's share of the funding. Obviously Carl Perkins may be eliminated at the end of next year or for fiscal year of 1997, but, even in between, we need to be doing more at the secondary level, be more aligned with what other states are doing. Minnesota is unique in their discrepancy or imbalance, I guess maybe a better term, on how they allocate and distribute funds.

*Some general discussion on the Minnesota split of secondary to postsecondary funds from the Carl Perkins monies and recent trends. The general agreement was that postsecondary had, throughout the 1980's, been heavily favored in the split, receiving as high as 92% of all federal Perkins dollars in some years, but that the formula has been changing over the past couple of years toward more support of secondary vocational education.*

**Jim Arndt**: Based on last Friday's meeting with MASVA, some of the comments that were made by people from the St. Paul area, that has not happened. When I look at our analysis of funding, we really haven't increased that much. Duluth Technical College, as an example, gets $513,000, from what I was told, and we get basically $78,000. Then if there is a re-allocation, we could get another small chunk. But the things we could accomplish and do for the special populations we are already serving in our schools—as a proactive process—rather than waiting until it is postsecondary and it is remedial. I believe in my heart that we would be able to accomplish more and be proactive in providing such services.

That also applies as we start looking at what is going to go on, as an example, in tech prep right now. It is controlled through the fiscal agencies of the technical colleges. With the merger happening, what's going to happen? Many things that we do at the secondary level are at the mercy of the postsecondary institutions. They can call the shots and we have to play the game. I believe that we should be given some autonomy for making those decisions and controlling some of that process. However not, I would sit here and say it, if it meant that money and fiscal decision-making would end up in the hands of the local school districts and it became discretionary for distribution purposes. I would rather maintain the current system.

*Mr. Arndt offered several other written documents for the Council to consider.*

**Jim Arndt**: We need to ensure that all vocational ed is consistent with the intent of Goals 2000 legislation, that the emphasis on getting states to establish clear academic and occupational standards for students is achieved. When you ask, "Where could the Council be heading?" I think this is one thing where a number of organizations could band together to try to accomplish that task at least for the state of Minnesota. Ensure that vocational education balances a mastery of academic competencies with the development of occupational skills—something that we have been lacking. Attack the barriers to academic and vocational integration. Somehow we need to break down those barriers and walls. Foster the development of assessment and credentialing systems. Who's teaching what and how do we accomplish that and do we have in all areas quality instructors? It is

an issue that is going to be presented this year.

I was not able to fill a position because the interviewing committee felt that either of the two candidates would have done more damage for the program, but, based on state licensing and being a vocationally-certified program, I could not do a variance, because there were two licensed candidates available. So we didn't fill the position and this year they just took the position away from me in budgeting. And Marilyn Marsh, the director of special ed, has lost four or five positions through the same process. We had a very difficult time finding a person in technology ed for a position that was open here. We did fill it, but it was difficult. Around the Twin Cities, I know there were three or four positions in vocational, technical, or industrial technology areas that were unfilled this year because they were not able to do variances or waivers on potential candidates. In Duluth alone, with the 73 staff that I supervise, I am projecting a retirement basis of 19 people within the next 5 years, with our aging population. Many of those positions will not be able to be filled with the current rules and requirements the way they stand. And it could just get worse, which means that if we can't fill a position, the potential is that that position is eliminated and we lose the program, due to lack of staffing. This causes further erosion and further reduction in our offerings and alternatives to students.

We need to do more to develop career opportunities and support professional development as school based and allow academic and vocational teachers within the schools to plan and develop. Tech prep programs demonstrate that it is possible to structure formal linkages between secondary and postsecondary institutions and we need to continue that, no matter what happens with the merger.

And, finally, you should have the first two pages of the draft of "Making the Case for Change" from CERA, the Coalition for Educational Reform and Accountability. Basically there's seven areas that they are talking about: guidance, counseling, instruction, technology, building improvements, work-based learning, postsecondary opportunities, added investment, and need for continued dialog. This just kind of wraps it up—where should we be going and what are the some of the areas. That's about all I can say. Hopefully, I haven't said too much to confuse or muddy the waters. Anything I can answer or address at this point? Questions that you would like to ask me?

*General discussion took place on how local vocational administrators can hire qualified instructors and future changes in licensure in Minnesota. The Council Members thanked Mr. Arndt for his time and testimony.*

# Twin Cities Public Hearing May 24, 1995

Present for the Council were: Donna M. Lorix, Council President
Thomas J. Berkner, Council Member
Sue E. Boehland, Council Member
Alvin T. Huff, Council Member
Richard N. Lennes, Council Member
Larry A. Lundblad, Council Member
Rhoda D. Robinson, Council Member

Council Staff Present: Eric C. Crane, Intern
Peggy J. DeVries, Intern
Brenda M. Dillon, Executive Director
Donna L. Landers, Administrative Assistant
Duane A. Rominger, Senior Planner

## Joseph Graba, Deputy Executive Director, Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board

Well, thank you, Ms. Chairman and members, for honoring my request for being first. I have another commitment. I need to tell you I am nervous about even doing this. I haven't dealt with secondary education issues in any in-depth way for quite a few years. I have been involved in this discussion about workforce development activities since the Council led the Task Force on Education and Employment Transition and I've also been involved in the EETC, the Education and Employment Transition Council, that's been in operation for the last two years and is now scheduled to go out of business about June 30. I've looked at your questions; you've asked us to comment about our sense of the state of secondary vocational education in the state, I can tell you what my sense is, but I also want you to know that it's not based on any in-depth knowledge.

I have a strong belief that secondary vocational education in this state has been deteriorating over the last 15 years in terms of breadth and access to secondary vocational education programming. Now that's a perspective that, as I've said, is not based on any solid data or any solid research. There are probably others who could speak more specifically to that.

I do want to tell you though that I am increasingly concerned about the growing disenchantment in the American people with their educational systems. I think that that's an accurate statement about

the elementary and secondary education. I know that that's an accurate statement about postsecondary education. Much of what I want to say today to you will apply at least as much to postsecondary education as it does to elementary and secondary education.

I believe—this is really hard, and may be an overstatement, but I believe—the American people are very close to discarding their public education system in this country. I really am frightened at that prospect. But I think that's not too much of an overstatement and I have to be honest and tell you that I am worried that it may be an unstoppable trend. That's a real concern to me, but I think it's quite possible. The growth and interest in charter schools, the growth in home-schooling, the growth in discussions about vouchers are all, I think, coming out of that growing disenchantment with the existing system. It's hard for people who are in education not to be really angry about that and not to be terribly defensive about it. Yet I really think that those of us that are involved in it need to understand that it's not an indictment of the people. It is an indictment of the system. I think it's accurate to ask, or legitimate to ask, is the system changeable to the point where it can, in fact, meet the learning needs of our society? I want to leave with you that serious question about whether or not you think that's the case.

Our schools are not real to the students that are in them. That's true in elementary and secondary education, but it's also true in postsecondary education. They are largely driven by the interests of the people inside of them, rather than the needs of the people that are there to learn. They are relatively static in a rapidly changing society. Our schools are islands of stability and, as a result, are losing their relevancy to the society in which they are operating. That's the most serious statement that I can make to you today. As a person who has spent his life, his adult life, in public education, I am increasingly concerned that society views us as less relevant today than we were 15 years ago or 20 years ago.

So part of what I want to leave with you today is not necessarily to give you specific suggestions about secondary vocational education, but to say that I don't think any of us are thinking radically enough about the changes that need to be made in our learning systems in order to meet the changing needs of the people that we are intended to serve. I believe that we tend to be trapped in our own mindset by what we've grown up with, by what we've inherited in terms of our vision of how learning can occur. I tell my colleagues in postsecondary education that I think that education in the '90s is about where the railroads were in the 1940s. We are going to see tremendous diversification of learning in the next 15 years, in the same way that we saw tremendous diversification of transportation. None of us can envision where that's going to go, but all of us that have an interest in keeping public education the prime provider need to be more sensitive to the changing attitudes of the public at large, to our business leaders, to our political leaders, and either we participate in designing the new systems that meet the needs or the world is going to pass us by and they are, in fact, doing that, in at least the higher ed arena, if not on the elementary and secondary. I would like to suggest, to those of you who are interested, a book called *The Monster Under the Bed* [S. Davis & J. Botkin, 1994]. Mel Johnson gave me a copy of it back over the holidays and it's essentially saying that business is mastering the art of teaching, simply because the higher ed systems in this country have ignored the learning needs of the currently employed. As a result, this book asserts, the next wave of providers is going to come from the for-profit sector, not from government-funded and organized learning organizations.

Madam Chairman and members of the Council, I don't know if that's at all helpful. I just sort of feel

like a bomb-thrower these days—trying to tell my colleagues that time is running out for public education to stay in control of its own destiny. The policy initiative is moving to the business community and the political community, because they believe that we're not willing to make the changes necessary to meet the needs of the employers or of the students that we have in our institutions. I have a lot of other things that I would like to have said to you today and that I could have said without being quite as controversial, but that's the message that I wanted to start out with.

We know two things about every little kid that's born. One is that they are going to be a member of a community, and two, that they are going to have to work for a living. Education ought to relate to those two functions. They need to be part of our society—productive, participatory members of our society. That's the community. And they need to be able to work, to support themselves and their families. It's really difficult for us to point at specific parts of that learning activity in most of our institutions and identify which pieces of it are pointed at those two major broad outcomes. Rhoda [Robinson] and I have served together on that task force and she knows that my thinking is influenced by the discussions we had there. But learning needs to move out of the schools in order for it to be real. It needs to get out into the communities. It needs to get out in the workplace, and it needs to be driven by the changing needs of both the learners and the employers of our society.

With those comments, Madam Chairman, I think I should quit now. I'm completely out of time.

## Dr. Mary Jacquart, Tech Prep Program Manager, State Board of Technical Colleges

I wrote a pretty impassioned letter this morning, and I'll leave that with you, but on the way over here I thought I really have three key points that I wanted to leave you with. One is, I think, what's most critical is taking a look at where vocational, secondary and postsecondary education is right now and if I believe we're on the edge and we're going to fall forward and move ahead and really provide the leadership for a lot of the reform activities that are taking place across the State of Minnesota—a lot of these are based on the philosophy of vocational education and the premises from which we've been building here in the state and nationally—and if we don't do that, we're going to fall backwards and not be around. I really think it's a critical time right now. With that, I think the Council needs to attend to maintaining and building collaborative relationships between those of us in vocational education and those in the business/industry sector, in all different levels of education, as well as in the broader community and to really stick with the school to work effort and look at the work of the Education and Employment Transitions Council and help us, as a state, implement that.

A third concern I have is that when we look at Minneapolis and St. Paul in the Twin Cities—there are needs all across the state but—I think we're at a critical point in the metro area with the urban students and the diversity between the haves and the have-nots. That gap is just widening and I think one way that we can maintain the economy of the state is to take a careful look at our metro area and the youth who are the future of this state and what are we going to do before that deteriorates any further.

So those are the three elements that I want to say, and I'll leave you my other thoughts.

## Jim Korkki, Director of Dislocated Worker Programs, Minnesota Department of Economic Security

Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to let me talk to you a little bit today. I work with the Minnesota Department of Economic Security and in that role there I work currently as the director of dislocated worker programs. Those are programs to help individuals who have lost their jobs due to plant closings or large cutbacks in the operations of business, or other reasons, and our role is to try to help these individuals and move them into new jobs as quickly as possible.

In addition, I'm going to talk a little bit about a couple of other programs that are administered through our department because I've had some experience with it in the past. My comments are going to be focused primarily on postsecondary because all of the programs that I've worked with have been for adults—through the dislocated worker program, through the job training partnership adult program, which serves disadvantaged adults who are oftentimes moving into the workforce for the first time, and through the STRIDE program, which serves individuals that are on AFDC with dependent children. So my comments are going to be focused primarily on that.

Our role at the state level is primarily to administer these programs to help individuals in these situations move into their first job or get training, upgrading, or retraining to move into new jobs. We have a network of service delivery agencies throughout the states, primarily through the private industry councils. I think some of you may be aware of that network out there. There are 17 local areas throughout the state that have a private industry council that administers our programs and they set up the guidelines of who is going to be served, how they're going to be served, and what kinds of priorities are going to be provided.

I've worked in these programs for well over 20 years. I've worked with the technical colleges throughout that entire period. In the beginning, my career was as an educational counselor with employment training programs. I provided guidance to individuals coming into our programs and a lot of times they were referred to training at the technical colleges. Since I've been at the state level, I've worked with the JTPA education coordination funds in helping set up and administer special projects that coordinate activities between technical colleges and the JTPA system, as well as specialized programs.

I feel I've had a lot of experience at a lot of different levels in working with the technical colleges. I have to say, for the most part, my experience has been very positive throughout my entire career working with the technical college system. I really want to focus on a couple of areas. One is to talk about the needs of the clientele that we work with and how we need to work closer with the technical colleges in terms of moving those individuals through training programs and into employment. The other thing I want to talk about is some coordination issues and some things that

are happening now and probably over the next two or three years that are real critical and on which I think our system in the technical colleges needs to be working very closely.

First of all, as I indicated, my primary experience is with dislocated workers and one of the things that we find with that population is that a lot of those individuals who have been in jobs for a long time are being dislocated. They may have been in the labor market for four, five, ten, twenty years and they're faced with having to find a new job or a new career. A lot of times that means that they have to go to school for either complete retraining or upgrading or updating of their job skills. These individuals typically don't have the luxury of being able to go into long-term training—two-year type of training—because they have financial commitments that have to be met, yet they do need the training to compete in the labor market. We find that, in a lot of cases, the technical schools are responsive in customizing the types of training, but I think, in the future, the priority and the emphasis for this group of workers is really going to have to be on how to get these people into customized training so that they can get the skills that they need in a short period of time and be able to move into a job, rather than having to
(1) wait on a waiting list for a program to open up, or (2) to have to go through a long-term kind of a training program in order to get the skills that they need. So I think that one of the real issues is being responsive to the needs of this population.

The other population that I mentioned is what we currently call the STRIDE program, which is the AFDC recipients. There are a lot of changes, through welfare reform, that are happening right now. I think, in the future, what we're going to see is that the emphasis is going to be on providing these individuals with very quick, shorter-term training to prepare them for jobs in the labor market. It's a situation where the system needs to be responsive so that people can get in and get through their training and get into jobs quickly.

Another area that's important for all of the populations that we work with are efforts to deal with the special needs of those populations. I could probably point to a number of examples where there are good things going on that are targeted especially to these groups, such as having childcare facilities for people who have small dependent children. I think those kinds of activities need to be encouraged and expanded and, in a number of locations I've seen, they have specialized support group activities for targeted populations. That's an area where I think it's critical to have some attention focused on it and expanded if possible.

The other thing that I want to talk about is a couple of initiatives that we're currently dealing with that I think are important for the technical education community to be aware of. One is that we're moving into what's called a one-stop career system model. I think some of you may have had some background information on it, but generally our programs are heavily reliant upon federal funding and federal funding is diminishing. We don't know what's going to happen in the future and we're in a major transitional period in employment training programs. One of the things that is being promoted and that Minnesota is trying to take a lead in, is—since there's going to be a lot of consolidation of programs—to look at how to streamline the delivery of services to individuals to reduce duplication and to improve efficiency of services. We're moving at this point into what we're calling the Minnesota Career Center, where people can go into many different locations and access up-front services and information about what kinds of services are available to them in Minnesota—if they need a job, if they need training, if they need retraining.

We did receive a grant from the Department of Labor that's effective this July 1st and we expect to

get ongoing grants for three years. At this time, at the State level, it's really being driven by some policy guidance but the real activity in terms of what a one-stop career center system is, is being developed locally. At this point it involves heavily the JTPA private industry council system, the job service system, the other programs that are administered within the Department of Economic Security—they're kind of the focal point of this at this point. But because there are so many different agencies that need to be involved and integrated into the system at the local level, all levels of education are being involved as well as human services. Again, it's something that we're in the planning for implementation stage and I think that it's very critical and important that the technical college system be a part of that and that they be involved and informed about what's going on there.

The other thing that I want to mention real quickly is that, at the state level, the administrative body that oversees the JTPA program for the last 10 to 12 years is called the Governor's Job Training Council and, with the current legislative session, we've gotten some legislation passed to change that council to expand it and broaden its role. It's going to be effective July 1st. It's called the Governor's Workforce Development Council and what it's going to do is focus on workforce issues that impact all of our systems on a statewide basis, rather than looking at JTPA or STRIDE or dislocated workers. It's really workforce issues and involving all of the systems that need to be involved in that. Mr. Graba indicated that the EETC, the Education and Employment Transitions Council was being dissolved, but it's really not. It's going to be brought under the umbrella of this Workforce Development Council.

Again, it's going to have representation from secondary and postsecondary vocational education on there and it's another real opportunity as we move into the future with the changes that are coming.

I see my time is also up. Again, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to provide you some comments.

**Richard Lennes**: Just one quick question. If I understood you right on the STRIDE, you said that one of the challenges would be to reduce the cycle time from initial training to when they become wage earners. That's what I understood. Are you suggesting that they get their basic training at least for entry-level employment and then continue their education after they are on the job with some type of on-the-job training plus coursework? Is that what you're suggesting?

**Jim Korkki**: I think, just based upon what I've seen with welfare reform, that's probably somewhat more of the direction that the program is going to take, rather than long-term education.

## Bruce Nauth, JTPA Manager, State Board of Technical Colleges

Thank you, Madam President, Director Dillon, members of the Council. Thanks for the chance to be here. I think probably when I was looking at vocational education in general and the future of it, a quote from Charles Dickens is probably the most appropriate, "It's the worst of times, and it's the best of times." I think we're going to look at the worst of times—hearing what Joe Graba had to say—he probably outlined it very, very well. I think vocational education has a great deal of challenges to face. I think one of its main challenges has been doing things as business as usual or complacency. I think sometimes stability can breed this and I think, in some respects, vocational education has experienced that. The Chinese symbol for danger is also the symbol for opportunity. I feel that vocational education is sitting on the edge of the cusp of not only danger but also opportunity. It's at an opportune point, where it can go forward or, as Dr. Jacquart mentioned, it can go backward and I too share some of the same concerns that Mr. Graba had. If I was in church I'd shout, "Amen!" If it was the '60s, I'd say, "Right on!" He's captured, I think, the essence of what education in general is facing, but particularly vocational education, whether it be secondary or postsecondary.

I think one of the things that we have to be willing to do is be innovative and [Mr. Graba] talked about thinking radically. There's an analogy some people use: the context of rapid change in our society is like baseball. In baseball, we all know first base, second base, third base, and home. But think of it as Chinese baseball, where once you get up to the plate and you hit the ball, everybody starts moving the bases. It's crazy and we live in a very turbulent time and the rules are changing as we strike the ball.

The question is, can we rewrite the rules to best suit us? I think the challenge is to do that. The challenge is to take a look at and participate in the reform movements that exist today, particularly the School to Work Opportunities Act and the initiatives at the federal level—like it or not, the block grants. We can sit around and whine about it or we can get in there and start pitching. I think we have an opportunity to do that. Let's make our voices heard. Let's let people know, both at the secondary and postsecondary level, vocational education is the key to workforce development. I spent eleven years at the local level working with job training programs and the last seven at the state level working with some of the same programs that Mr. Korkki talked about. The concept of new workforce development councils is where forces are thrown together in sort of a super council, which you are all familiar with. In some respects, it is unpleasant. In others, it is an opportunity to re-write and put our mark on the map. I want to encourage us not to despair. It is the worst of times, but it can also be the best of times. And I think vocational education has a real need to step up to the plate, if you will, and hit the ball, regardless of where the bases are. They are going to keep changing. Let's worry about that after we hit the ball.

So I want to encourage the Council to be part of the reform movement and to think more globally and systemically. We can no longer think of ourselves just as vocational educators. We must join forces with the job training agencies, with labor, and with business. We cannot handle the workforce development of our nation by ourselves. There are not enough resources. There's not enough time and we must work together. I guess that would be my main point to the Council. The

main caveat would be to keep looking over our shoulder. I think Mr. Graba really hit it on the head—business will take our place. Somebody else will step up to the plate if we don't.

I recently had a friend transfer into private business. He's going to be working with an out-placement firm and developing educational programs for business. He spent the last seven years at a technical college and, prior to that, about five years in local government doing workforce development. He's had enough of the public sector and he's transferred to the private. With $30 billion per year in private education and training—we cannot ignore that fact—we must be willing to innovate.

## Dr. James R. Stone, Associate Professor, Department of Vocational Technical Education, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Campus

Thank you. Thank you Madam Chair and members of the committee. Being the scholar that I am, I actually have a paper for you and there will be an exam at the end, so I'll try to highlight some of the things that are in this paper. It's always interesting to follow Joe Graba. If he suggested that he was throwing bombs, I'm bringing the rest of the artillery. It's really difficult to talk about vocational education absent some consideration of education in general and what it means to educate the whole person. This separateness that we continue with our present vocabulary and our mental models that we have, both exacerbates the problem and continues it. That is to say that educating the whole person includes education for vocations and, if you buy into John Dewey's notions, that includes not only work but family and community and other lifelong pursuits. So it's difficult to sort of take a piece of it out and think about it separately, using labels that we have today. But in spite of that, I will suggest some things that you might want to consider.

I would like to give just a little bit of background to what I will offer as three principles that I would like the Council to consider in terms of vocational education. I have a vision I would like to present to you, and a model for voc ed and indeed a role for this Council in that.

I did my homework and it is all properly cited. I think we need to look at three contexts—three societal institutions—as we think about vocational education: there is the school, there is the workplace, and there is the community in which we all live. I was heartened to hear Joe talk about the community, because it is one of those vocations that we have overlooked for far too long.

If we look at secondary schools, let me just tell you that what I am hearing comes from my more than 10 years of doing research and working with schools in communities across the United States through the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, as well as my work through the University of Minnesota. My sense of what schools are today is that for most kids it is a social experience. Particularly true once you hit what we call the high school years. Kids find that the school work is undemanding, uninteresting, and lacking in consequence. In interviews with kids in places as diverse as New York City—Brooklyn Automotive High School—as white as Anoka,

Minnesota, as laid back as parts of Southern California, and in various other places in the country, it is real intriguing when I ask kids the same question, "What's the difference between the work that you do in school and the work you do for pay?" Inevitably, regardless of location, they say the work they do for pay has consequences. Now that to me is a serious indictment of public education generally. I think the other thing about school that has struck me is that it is the epitome of late 19th century technology. It is mass production at its finest or at its worst. It doesn't matter. Everything is interchangeable. History is unconnected to Science is unconnected to Math is unconnected to any vocational studies is unconnected to anything except the hockey team. In Texas, it is football. This is, I think, a structural problem.

I think it is important to note that in the schools there are a lot of good teachers. And my comments about schools are not to disparage the people in the system. I think [W. Edwards] Deming told us a lot about where the problems lie in any kind of organization. There are a lot of good vocational teachers as well, but the dilemma is that the structures that once supported them and, indeed, had connections to the work place and the community, have disappeared over time, for a whole lot of reasons, none of which can be justified.

Ironically, at the same time, there is a tremendous amount of vocational education going on outside of what we call voc ed. We could look at the various forms of school-based enterprises that are popping up in more than 25 percent of the schools nationwide. You can look at the whole service learning movement, which is very vocational in its application. We find that a lot of these are done by academic teachers, oftentimes. It seems to me the question for voc ed is, "How does vocational education become relevant in the schools today and become a contributor to the education of the whole person for all students?" As opposed to what it is rapidly becoming and that is a program for marginalized kids to whom we attach labels.

If we look at the workplace, the second context, that I think is important to consider, we find some interesting dynamics. First of all, there is a massive de-jobbing of America. The work that needs to be done continues, but for the actual doing of the work—the job—they are replacing human work or human initiative with software. First Interstate Bank in L.A., at the end of last year, announced record profits and in the same breath laid off 25 percent of its workforce, more than 9,000 workers. I can cite you lots of statistics. I won't bore you with it, but if we are suggesting things to look at, Jeremy Rifkin's recent book on *The End of Work* [*:The decline of the global labor force and the dawn of the post-market era*, 1995] is a revealing piece that you might want to take a peek at.

Technological advances are moving us in the direction where it is no longer necessary to have the human element in production. My concern is that the agricultural production mode of today is the model for all production modes of tomorrow—where fewer than two percent of the workforce are now employed in production ag. There are estimates by the AFL/CIO that suggest, within a generation, we could have as few as two percent of workers in all production areas. We also find, in today's workforce, that it is evolving and splintering into a highly paid, highly skilled component, that is probably destined to be the minority, and a low skilled, low paid group that is destined to be the majority. There are record rates of overtime in recent years amongst those who have jobs. Which is a comment on how business seeks to make profit. There is growth in underemployment, both in hours worked and in skills used on the job. There is an exponential growth in temporary workers. Manpower, Inc. is now the United State's largest employer, bypassing McDonald's. They have nearly 600,000 employees under contract. Thirty-four million American workers, over one third of the employed workforce, are temporary, contingent, contractual, or freelance workers. We

can talk about the demise of the social contract, but that's almost humorous anymore. All the time this is going on, productivity is increasing at very dramatic rates. At the same time, those rates don't keep pace with the increase of CEO salaries and bonuses.

Let me suggest here three principles that ought to undergird any rethinking of voc ed. First of all, anything in vocational education has to be tied to a broader educational reform agenda. This separateness that we have maintained since Smith-Hughes parallels the nature of work and the distinction of headwork and handwork. It is both artificial and it is detrimental to the education of individuals.

Vocational education has to be viewed as a lifelong process. It is neither a program, nor is it an event and it has to be connected to the lived reality of the kids and of the adults that we are working with, the lived reality of their families and their communities and their neighborhoods.

Let me suggest a vision that seems to me to capture what I hope vocational education becomes. And I'll read this quickly.

What we now know as vocational education will be part of a comprehensive, holistic approach to preparing young people to be productive participants in our society. For some it may mean an early introduction to specific skills training, for others it may provide an opportunity to explore work-like possibilities, and for still others it will be preparation for continued education beyond high school. For all students in public education it will be part of their formal schooling experience. Vocational educators will be part of cross-disciplinary instructional teams who work with cohorts of students for extended portions of the school day for more than a year at a time. The focus on learning will be on real problems that have real meaning to learners and to the communities in which they live. The community itself will be a primary source of learning and a laboratory for academic, social, and career development. The community becomes, if you will, a vehicle for integrating both academic and vocational learning.

It seems to me that there are some models that we could look at. I would suggest that we explore the Boston Compact. It is an intriguing model and it created a whole new conversation amongst business, the workplace, and the schools. It seems to me that Minnesota is ripe for a compact, and I would suggest that—to coin a phrase—we could call it a contract with our kids, as opposed to a contract with America.

I would conclude with a comment by John Goodlad and, again, there are other thoughts here in the paper you are welcome to peruse. John Goodlad published an article not so long ago. Goodlad is one of the preeminent educational scholars today and is involved heavily in the reform movement. He observes, in an article entitled "On the Half-Educated Person," that the importance of learning to make things work has not only been pushed off center stage, it's been pushed off the stage and replaced by a kind of learning that has no particular relevance in the world in which we live. Now that's coming from someone who is not a vocational educator, who probably can't spell vocational education, but fully acknowledges that we are only doing a partial job of educating the whole person. I suspect that's something we ought to give a great deal of attention to. Thank you.

## Christine Matuzek-Rivas, Education Director, Minnesota AFL/CIO

Madam President, Director Dillon and members of the Council, I want to thank you for the opportunity to come and speak to you about such an incredibly important subject as the future of our young people and our current workforce and vocational education in general.

As I was sitting here listening to the previous speakers, it brought to mind a statement that we used to use in the telecommunications industry when I was representing workers there. We used to say that if you heard something or did something once, that was an occurrence. If it happened twice, it was a trend. So I would assume you're getting some of the same messages from each of us, so I think we can make the assumption that there are some trends out there, and not necessarily positive ones.

Before I begin with some of my comments, I just wanted to tell you—for those of you that don't know me or don't know much about the AFL/CIO—that, as education director of the AFL/CIO, I work for and represent about 400,000 union members in the state of Minnesota and about 750 different labor organizations that are affiliated with the Minnesota AFL/CIO. As Education Director, I have had the opportunity over the last six to seven years to work with probably every statewide board, task force, and committee that's been put together—just about all, not all—that have dealt with education reform in this state. In that respect, I've had a heck of an education myself. But I think that it gives me a perspective about what we are doing or not doing in this state and in this country that we need to be doing. Also in my position as Education Director, I've had the opportunity also to go into many of our high schools across the state throughout the school year. I'm called upon to talk about the labor movement or the world of work, but in doing so, I can talk a little bit about what I see as far as our students and how they view reality and the world of work.

There is no question in my mind—and I was reading your report this morning that came through my mail, so I am speaking to the choir here, I know, but—in reference to secondary education, there is just no question in the last 10 or 15 years, there hasn't been an emphasis on vocational education. The resources aren't there. They haven't been allocated. And we seem to be tracking our students. I know we all hate that word, but that's exactly what we are doing. We need to acknowledge that, that we are tracking our students for a postsecondary education, in most cases in a B.A. or a Master's degree track, and I think we are making a huge, huge mistake.

When I go into the classrooms, it's real obvious to me that most of the young people in those classrooms think they are all going to grow up to be CEOs of some major corporation and that they all need a baccalaureate or a masters degree or a Ph.D. That's not where the work is and that's not where we need to be preparing our students. I think that we need to be doing more in the area of education of merging the academic education, as we know it, along with more applied learning in all areas across the board, whether it be in postsecondary or secondary education. There needs to be that melting and that weaving of the two coming together to really prepare our young people for the world of work.

I think that vocational education is in a state of disarray. There doesn't seem to be a commitment to

resources in this state and in this country in the area of vocational education. I hear a lot of people talking about how they want the best for our children and our young people, but we are not really putting our money where our mouths are. That concerns me a lot. Getting back to the discussion of a model, we are using a more collegiate model in postsecondary vocational education. We are moving toward it when we need to be moving away from that. I think that, with the changes in skill levels needed for the jobs of the future, we need to have more and more applied learning. I think, too, in reference to the education and employment transitions system that needs to be established or continued to be worked on and needs to evolve in this state, we need more collaboration. And I think we need more collaboration from the bottom up in that process.

You know I talked earlier about sitting on just about every statewide board and task force. I think I am a creative, innovative individual, but I don't have all the answers and it scares me when I go into each one of these task forces and I look around the room and it's the same people. It's always the same people and in most cases we would be considered the people at the top. We're making these decisions that are going to affect the people that need to work with the systems and need to live with the outcome of those systems. We need to find a way to bring business into this picture, obviously. We talk a lot about doing that, but we are not doing it.

We need to bring more labor leadership into the picture. Getting back to the teachers, the students, and the parents, we need to find a way that we can access those people and access their ideas and get them involved in the decision-making and the implementation of these systems. Instead of a lot of people representing different organizations and most of us sitting at the top, if that's what you want to call it, coming together in a room like this and deciding what is in the best interests of the people that are actually going to be using that system.

In reference to special populations, there's no question about it, that we need to be doing more in reference to support services, specialized equipment. The job hasn't been done. I don't think we've begun to do the job that's necessary. Again, that means more allocation of resources. I read the purpose of this Council this morning. I'm not sure when the last time was that you all read it. But you are a very important group, a very important policy-making group. I think that you have a lot of clout there if you want to use it and I think that you can get the message out and get it to the people that need to hear it. Those resources need to be allocated more to some of these things.

A couple of things, last but not least—just kind of an FYI: The Minnesota Federation of Teachers, one of the organizations that we represent, is putting together a commission on the future of secondary education and they are going to be looking at this whole issue within the next year and doing some research of their own. I'm sure that they are going to want to share that information with you and want to interact with you throughout that process, just so that you are aware of it and know it, so that you can go down that path together instead of separately.

And last but not least, I guess this is more to you as your role as Council, I think it is real important that you make sure that the decisions that you are making and the things that you are doing are proactive and, more importantly, to make sure that they are not politically reactive. And too often I see that in our state. Those that are in policy-making roles have a tendency to make decisions that are politically reactive instead of proactive. So again thank you.

# Ron Dreyer, Director of Programs, Research and Information Management, State Board of Technical Colleges

Good afternoon. Madam Chair, members of the Council, I'm pleased to be here and share a few remarks. A couple of things about my remarks: In thinking about them, I decided to make them somewhat narrower in focus, mostly related to my work responsibilities that I have today, that I'll be having with the new Board of Trustees in our higher ed system as of this July first. I also am not going to be giving specific recommendations, but try to set a context and develop a couple of issues where I think future work will then become evident or a little bit more explicit just from the context.

One general comment: I think vocational education today is fairly healthy. There are probably a number of folks today—just in the few minutes that I've been here—who might think otherwise or see a lot of need for change and paint a bleak picture. In the postsecondary side, I think a lot of the processes we've set up, a lot of the standards that have come into place, have been looked at and admired. I think we can see some of what we do actually applying to more programs—the community colleges and the state university programs in the state—because of the way we've operated in the last several years. I think there are some advantages to all of higher ed from the way that vocational education has been managed in the last several years.

Let me start with my first bit of context, talking about the merger of the three higher ed systems. It's a little bit like the word *kayak*. It's kind of an interesting word, because when you dramatically change it around and spell it backwards, you end up with exactly the same thing. The merger could be like that—bring three systems together and when you are all done, you just end up with the same thing you had before you started. That really can't happen. The first thing that needs to change and is already done is that we need to save money in the merger. That might sound like it's going to be a lot of hard work to do that, but actually the legislature has already done that for us, or done it to us, depending on your perspective.

We didn't get funded for inflation. We didn't get the $26 million for bringing technical college employees on, some other adjustments, caps, and on and on. We've been funded well below a status quo budget, so the funding is already taken care of. We've made all the savings we need to make. The problem, obviously is to make that reduced funding fit with what we do over the next couple of years and that's going to be the real problem.

The legislation that's coming out of the conference committee—and I haven't heard if it's been signed by the governor, but I assume it has been or at least will be shortly—clearly says that they want to maintain an increased access in quality and also efficiency. Those are the real challenges that are coming out of the merger for us. It's going to put a lot of pressure on all of higher ed, not just vocational education.

I think you'll also see the context changing with an increased emphasis on decentralization. That's already started with a 20 percent reduction in staff in the system office. We've more to do and 20 percent fewer people; that's clearly a message that we need to decentralize. So there will be new

and different expectations from the system office and also on the campus level. There's going to be increased expectations that institution staff prepare quality program proposals. One of the things I said in my opening remarks is that I'm going to focus more on my job responsibilities and that's in the program review and program approval of all the programs in the state. That's one of the things I see happening: we're just going to need to train and trust folks in the colleges to do their work. The system office won't be a regulatory agency making a lot of detailed decisions. There's going to be a lot more decentralization occurring.

A little bit more on context. I think we're going to see a lot more focus on performance measurement and accountability. I could give a long list of examples, but I'll just give a few examples that I see currently. There's going to be declining budgets and increased performance expectations. I gave you a copy of a paper that was presented in HECB [Higher Education Coordinating Board] last week, last Thursday, and I just took some of the implications out of that paper on the financing of higher education and here's three quick items.

(1) A cumulative fiscal gap is projected—and this is for state and local government—projected to be $2.5 billion by the year 2005. That paper said it would be zero in '97 but by the year 2005, the cumulative gap would be $2.5 billion.

(2) Also, slow or no growth in public higher education in the taxpayer appropriations per student in the 1990's.

(3) Persistent and growing increases in net tuition per student. Net tuition means after you factor out the financial aid. So tuition, the net tuition costs to students, will be increasing.

Responsibility for paying for postsecondary education is shifting to students; they have a trend line in there over the last 10 years. It does indeed show more and more costs of education being put on the backs of students, even after considering financial aid.

Another example where we have more emphasis on performance expectation is in the technical college funding now. They have to demonstrate performance in order to get portions of the funding. Another example is in the legislation, the 1995 legislation from our state: They put five million dollars and set that aside, and the Board of Trustees will only get that funding if they meet five criteria. There's one million dollars attached to each of the five. I'd like to share those with you now.

Increase the percents spent on instruction. The credits offered through telecommunications need to increase to get another million dollars. State university retention needs to increase by two percent, going from the freshman year to the sophomore year. The graduation rates need to increase by two percent. For two-year programs, students need to graduate within two years and, for four-year programs, students graduate within four years. Occupational placement and transfer rates at two-year institutions also need to increase. So now we've got money attached to some explicit five-year performance measures.

The issue that I see behind this is that some of these traditional measures of performance may not be adequate. They're the traditional ones that maybe haven't been measured and managed all that well. They're getting increased importance but they may not be the right ones. The one that I think

is most sensitive is the one that affects job-relatedness, the placement criteria. There is a changing clientele. We're serving older students and more part-time students and, as has been mentioned earlier today, there are changing jobs and changing skill expectations. I think it's getting increasingly hard to judge what even a related job is and yet we see the legislature saying this is what were going to be held accountable for. I think we're going to need a lot of help there.

Three quick quotes, and this comes out of the current, the May AVA [American Vocational Association] Journal on page 43. If you haven't read that article, I suggest that you do, it's nicely done. Here's the things futurists are saying about jobs. One, they're saying that companies may no longer assign specific jobs to employees in the near future. Second, our mission was and is based on this central premise: There are identifiable jobs for which people can gain employment. I think that's going to begin to change, that premise. What is the identifiable employment? What are the jobs? And lastly, a growing body of information indicates that work as we know it is vanishing. Some fairly strong statements about work and one of my messages is, "What are our performance indicators going to be?" What's our mission? What are our goals? How are we going to measure? How are we going to be accountable back to the public for the money they're putting into higher ed, especially when it's going to be increasingly harder to get funds? That's kind of conclusion one.

I've got another issue and conclusion. That is, distance learning should have a profound effect. I said should have, not will have, because we can sit and do nothing, then the effect is that we'll be kind of swept away by the others that are getting involved with distance learning more proactively. I'd like to see us be more proactive and I don't see that happening nearly enough in Minnesota. I see nice little bright spots here and there, but it doesn't seem like we're really structured to make enough of a difference. I think existing policies need to be changed. They might be set up just great for what we do today, but probably don't accommodate distance learning very well. Program review and approval and so on probably wouldn't work very well. These policies wouldn't work well with distance learning.

The conclusion from that is, I think we need more leadership, more strategic planning, structural reform, resources, staff development, different policies, and different performance measures to help support that change to distance learning. Thank you.

## Dr. David Kingsbury, Chair of the Industrial Technology Department, Bemidji State University

Folks, it's nice to be here speaking to the Council. A few years back, I was president of this August group and the only name I recognize that was here at that time was Bob Widerski and so it's my pleasure. I want to talk a little bit about what I think is going to be a change in structure between secondary and postsecondary vocational education. If I was going to be a guessing person, I'd guess you've heard some doom and gloom already today. I think we have opportunities to do some optimistic things and I think that those things are happening. The thing that will help, I think, is our ability to shift how we view what's going on. I think I have an example of that kind of shift.

Voc ed, historically, it seems to me, has always been a very useful way of organizing education. It's a nice way of organizing stuff together, much like foreign language is a way of organizing all kinds of studies. It was a useful pattern, but if you look within voc ed, what you have is a variety of changeable parts and that's what I'm going to focus on a little bit today.

We've signed a number of agreements around the state and I'd like to talk to you about that, because it has relationships with both secondary and secondary vocational and technical education. This is just one example: It's called an Industrial Technology–BA major. In this BA major, Bemidji State has signed articulation agreements with all public technical colleges in the state. We have three left who haven't signed by July 1. This allows a two-plus-two transfer of T & I [trades and industry] type credits into our BA in Industrial Technology.

That may not seem like a significant thing, but I want to elaborate on it a little bit. What this allows is a two-way street between universities and technical colleges. Bemidji State right now is the only one doing it, but it won't be long and others will be doing it as well. If you take the most traditional way of looking at it, it allows a young man or woman to go to a technical college, pick up an AAS degree and transfer in two full years, 96 credits, towards a four-year baccalaureate degree in industrial technology. They don't lose a single credit of those 96 that they've taken.

The opposite is also true. I had an interesting call from a daughter of one of my former students. She called up and she said her dad told her to call the old guy at Bemidji. She had finished a two-year degree, an AA degree when we still offered them at Bemidji, and was now in the Twin Cities and wanted to know if she could go on to a technical college to finish her baccalaureate degree and the answer was, yes, she could. She's going to take a diploma program at Dakota County Technical College, take 64 credits, and what she'll have remaining for her baccalaureate degree will be simply 33 credits to finish her major and she's finished her degree, a baccalaureate degree. I think that is going to be one of the future directions that we'll see in postsecondary technical in higher education or technical education. And that is interchangeability of parts in transfer.

There are models out now that we can use that allow the transfer of credits to occur between institutions. It's our goal at Bemidji State to help facilitate and educate folks on how to go about doing that. It takes a little bit of a shift in how we look at doing things but it is doable and it's doable now. What does that have to do with secondary vo-tech? Well, that particular model also works that way. It's ironic—although understandable, knowing human nature—that while there's been some academic snobbery between universities and technical colleges, that same human nature exists between technical colleges and secondary voc ed programs. We're working on a model program now at Brainard-Staples Technical College to allow students to take advanced placement vocational technical education—vis-a-vis tech prep type models—along with advanced placement academic courses that will allow a young man or woman to complete the first year of higher education. Beginning their junior and senior year [in high school], they would not only get advanced placement but actually complete the first year of their vocational technical education and move into what we call a one-plus-three, where they would have left three years of postsecondary education to complete either an AAS degree and go on to a baccalaureate degree.

To do that we're going to be facilitating discipline meetings between technical college folks, the academic discipline folks, and high school instructors who are in those various programs. I'm quite optimistic that it won't be too long before something that Howard Casmey [Minnesota Commission

of Education during the late 1970's] talked about years and years ago becomes a reality. That is that we'll end up having a virtual interchangeability of some of the last years of a high school program with the first year or so of postsecondary education for those students for whom that's appropriate. I think that's a basic model or basic premise that's implemented now and I think that will have a significant change on the face of both secondary voc ed and postsecondary voc ed.

I think if you can do anything about facilitating that, you'll need to use the bully pulpit to advocate for those kinds of changes and advocate for the existence of programs like tech prep and school to work transition and try to organize and line up those resources.

When I first started being a college professor, two things happened. One is I lost about 50 IQ points in the first five minutes; the second thing that occurred is that I was amazed by the number of colleges that were in the vocational technical education business. There were eight colleges at that time, back in the '70s, that offered vocational teacher education. Now there are two, the University of Minnesota and Bemidji State. And it's taken some entrepreneurship on our part to keep educating young men and women—or older men and women—who want to become vocational teachers. I think you have to realize that if we lose that capacity, then we lose our ability also to generate new models and the kind of training staff that those folks need.

In summary, what I wanted to try and point out is that there are models that allow the higher ed merger to take place, but those models are pretty basic kinds of things—they were not included in the vision for merger, whatever that was. They're included in the basic operations of school-to-school kinds of agreements, program-to-program kind of agreements. I believe we're making great progress there. I also believe we're making great progress in secondary voc ed, combining the best of what secondary voc ed has to offer with tech prep, with school-to-work transitions and I'm very optimistic that that's going to create also an avenue for young men and women to progress.

With that, I'm going to close my remarks and say that I wish the Council well. They have an important role to play this year. They can advocate again for fresh new ideas, fresh new visions. I think that's where you're going to play the biggest role. With that I'll close and ask you if you have any questions.

## Dr. William Stock, Director of Planning and Improvement, State Board of Technical Colleges

Madam President, Director Dillon, members of the Council. In preparing my remarks, I came across something in my file folders that I'm now cleaning out and I'd thought I'd set the tone for what I needed to do in preparing for some remarks here. It was a quotation that said, "Above all, don't be pretentious. In today's world, where knowledge keeps about as well as dead fish—even under refrigeration, that's not long—no one can be an expert in all areas." Given that, I thought I would focus on what I would recommended to the Council. Basing that somewhat on my experience with the Council and working with you and even your predecessors over the years, I have some thoughts as to what you might do. I should start off with a disclaimer saying that these are my thoughts and do not necessarily reflect the State Board of Technical Colleges.

I think the one thing that I've seen that I think you need to continue doing as a body is what we were talking about this morning and that is, use a process improvement versus a compliance/monitoring mode. I think that is so much more useful to all people involved. When you were talking about focus visits, that's essentially a process improvement model and I think it has so much more going for it.

We were at a national meeting—Ann Wood and I and Lezlie [Ingvalson] and Marti [Wicks]— about two weeks ago in which they were talking about compliance monitoring coming out of the U.S. Department of Education which is, in fact, looking for sites for the next go around. Listening to what that involves and then thinking about what are the positive results of that is not something I think that we want to come to Minnesota. It takes a tremendous amount of work and all you really find out is what you should have done in the past, not what you might do in the future. And I think that makes a big difference in the way that you approach something. So I would heartily recommend that you continue with that kind of a mode in your work.

Secondly, I think one role that you might have is that of scanning the environment. We've been talking about that some this morning. What's coming down the pike? What do we need to be getting ready for? What should we be looking out for? This has been something that, within our agency, a number of people have been doing for some time, but you always need a lot of help with that particular one.

It was about a year ago that I remember Jim Bensen, who's a member of this committee, talking about a problem that no one else had brought up—and I thought was very important and he asked if the Council has a role—and that was the number of mid-managers here in the [twin] cities who had been laid off and had not found work. He said at that time the number was somewhere in the area of 5,000. That situation hasn't gotten any better from the reading that I've been doing. I think it did identify a sector that someone might do something about and there are some things going on, but again we might ask the question, "Whose role is that?" Who should be doing that type of thing? And so I think that it's an area that you might look into and see what your role is in doing something like that.

I think you need to continue your R[esearch] & D[evelopment] activity. It's been good; I think it's been getting better. It certainly fills a function and you're addressing things that no one else does. Your publication on effective advisory committees has gotten nationwide publicity and, as we've gone to conferences, we've even told others about it and they find it's a one-of-a-kind thing there's a need for. I would recommend that you continue that type of thing and do an exemplary job.

I think that you need to function as a learning organization—as we talk about that, as we see that more in the literature. I think that's very important. You can have a role there as a model as well as in indicating that this is something that is a good way to approach organizations and how they do carry out their activities.

I think you can also practice strategic listening in dealing with your stakeholders, your customers, your regulators, and so on. What is it that people are saying? We spend a lot of time in schools teaching students how to speak. I don't think we spend enough time teaching them how to listen. We as adults, I think, can learn a lot there as well. I think you also need to be learning at all times. It's kind of a continuing learning situation for you as well as for others. You are in a number of

areas that are significant, are important, and you can do much in this area. You just have to try to keep up; possibly you can't keep up even then. It's a real ongoing task.

I think you need to look at being proactive versus being reactive. I'd like to think the Council is essentially doing that. What is there out there that we need to be getting ready for that is going to be important and should be addressed while there is still some lead time to do it? That lead time seems to be getting shorter and shorter as I look back on my time with the State and what we used to have for doing things and what we have now. It's quite a difference.

I think you need to be aware of systems thinking and all the discussion that's been going thus far this afternoon. I think that's readily apparent. Those are some thoughts that came to my mind based on my time in working with you and might be thoughts that you could give some consideration to as you continue with your role. Thank you.

## Warren Bradbury, Secretary-Treasurer, Minnesota Education Association

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspectives and really that's what you've invited. I am glad to do that. My name is Warren Bradbury. I am Secretary-Treasurer of the Minnesota Education Association. I am a classroom teacher, but a teacher on leave, as I have been and am completing four years as an officer of the MEA and will be returning to a language arts classroom in a junior high school at South Junior High in St. Cloud next fall.

The reason I'm here, after an invitation to someone at the Minnesota Education Association, is because I have spent a lot of time working on these issues now for several years. I am on the Education to Employment Transition Council of the State and as soon as I finish my testimony, I will be rushing off to a meeting at the Economic Security Department dealing with workforce development strategies. So I have spent a lot of time on these issues and have an affinity for them, and I think you will be able to tell from my comments some commitment to the kinds of concerns that your Council has.

Let me get into my comments and I'll leave some written summary copies with you, too, so that you can have them for your use later on. I'm very pleased to share my perspective and I want to start with three anecdotal comments that I have gathered from recent meetings with groups concerned with work and employment issues in Minnesota.

The first was a business leader who commented recently that citizens should be able to say, "I am an economic force in my community." When he said that I kind of thought about young people and I think it's sort of a difficult concept for young people to grasp perhaps, but I really like the phrase: "individuals as individual economic forces in their community."

The second person, another business person, commented that his father maintained a successful small manufacturing firm in its early years by insisting that, among potential employees, farm experience was required. That requirement, he believed, assured him that the employee would

always show up for work, would work hard, and would be able to fix equipment when it broke down. The fellow commented that he knew that that was exactly what happened, too. When he couldn't make that insistence any more, he always tried to hire people with those experiences.

My third anecdote comes from attending the first two forums on reinventing work. The most recent was just held yesterday in Minneapolis. Now there were some pretty big names in business and labor up on the dais, but the most striking moment for me came in a videotaped interview with a displaced worker who had recently been rehired. It went like this:

Interviewer: "What do you make at that company?"

Worker, proudly: "Cardboard boxes."

Interviewer: "No, no! How much are you paid?"

Then the worker, with some disappointment: "$11 an hour."

Clearly the worker was very proud of what he made and thought that was the point, instead of how much he made.

The three sets of statements illustrate three points I would share with you. First, I believe, and I perceive that teachers generally believe, that public education in general and public vocational education in particular should prepare people to truly be individual economic forces in their communities and in this state. Simply put, people should be capable of earning a good living from their skills and hard work. People should be able to purchase the necessities for a secure life with their earnings. And people should be able to contribute, through their skills and knowledge, to the well-being of their social and economic environment. I would be hard-pressed to state a more compelling vision for vocational and technical education in Minnesota and in America. Your Council, and educators more intimately involved in secondary and postsecondary, know far better than I the state of vocational and technical education in Minnesota and whether we are able to fulfill my vision or the multiple visions we consistently see printed in our institutional literature.

My perception, however, is that there is a greater disparity in quality of secondary programs due to the urbanization of our state and the reductions in funds available for and commitment to vocational programs in public schools. Incidentally, I wrote originally "reductions in funds based on my perceptions." One of your documents confirmed my understanding.

The last 25 years has seen vocational education fall in the educational priority list. The great hope emerging in the late 1980s and experiencing genuine commitment of spirit, if not dollars, is the school-to-work movement today. President Clinton's ability to save school-to-work programs from the congressional chopping block will be an absolute test of our national will. Let's watch that next.

Minnesota is fairly enthusiastic for school-to-work efforts and the acceptance among the public, among business leaders, and particularly among the general education community indicates a real support. I perceive that our postsecondary vocational and technical institutions are vast, strong, and quite effective. My hope is that we will have the common sense to skillfully circumvent the emerging turf, labor, and mission battles with the higher education merger so as to retain the faith

of the public.

Business and labor partnerships and apprenticeship programs in both the secondary and postsecondary level make economic and educational sense. They also help immensely to build public support for vocational and technical education. All partnerships, cooperative ventures, and merged missions must have benefits for all the participants. If we keep our students at the top of the participant list, we will avoid the less constructive debate over who our clients really are. I've seen intelligent adults spend hours of expensive time in lovely conference centers arguing that matter. Public education exists to educate students. Educate students well and they will do the rest. That's the sum and substance of American democratic and economic success.

The second story I told about the businessperson insisting on farm experience also illustrates my previous point. Alistair Cooke said the most important idea in early American life was the phrase, "to fix." My respect for that story, which has some nostalgia in it I think, is still legitimate. The lessons of life in this nation tell us that work, the propensity to do it, the ability to do it, and the prospects for tangible and intangible benefits from doing it, remain central to our lives. I think it is really central to the mission of our vocational system in this state, whether it is secondary or postsecondary. The real challenge is to reinfuse, I think, some of those community elements, including the value of work and genuine rewards from work, that I think people have commonly felt.

Finally, I included that story about the displaced worker simply because it illustrates the power and pride inherent in work. Policy makers and political and educational leaders have to rediscover this power. Actually, research shows quite conclusively that most workers like their jobs and do take pride in what they do. Like more and more aspects of our society, we'd be just fine if we were not receiving political and economic messages that say Americans are not doing enough, not being productive enough, are losing some kind of race. The facts say otherwise, but those of us with words of reassurance don't know how to get those facts across. That's something that I guess I would leave with you: A Council, such as yours, hopefully has enough power to help some of the rest of us make that point—that we are good at what we do. We know how to do what we do and we certainly know how to do things well in secondary and postsecondary education and, if we are given that kind of support that we deserve, we'll get the job done.

Just to conclude with a brief definition of accountability—that term comes about so much. It's simply this: The assurance that the system is providing the quality and products and services it promised to provide. You can be assured that you will hear more and not less about accountability. I hope that the Council will position itself so it is able to say that vocational and technical education in Minnesota is accountable. That, to me, would be quite enough. I'd be glad to respond to any thoughts that you might have. Otherwise, again, I thank you for the opportunity. I'm glad you are meeting and listening to lots of people and I wish you success.

## Martrene Wicks, Team Leader, State and Federal Programs, Minnesota Department of Education

Thank you very much. I'm pleased to be able to give testimony to you today. I've talked with all of you at various times in regard to secondary vocational education. In the Department of Education, that is one of the responsibilities that I have, amongst some other things. In the Office of State and Federal Programs, I also am responsible for migrant education, limited English proficiency, some areas of Chapter I, nutrition education, and training programs. I just give you that because that's what we are seeing these days where people have many responsibilities and our workload is spread thin when we need to concentrate very heavily in one particular area.

I have spent a great deal of time in vocational education because I think it is a time of change and a time of need. We are in a reform process right now at both the federal level and the state level. I take this time of change and reform as one of opportunity. I think that we have many opportunities in front of us right now, and we need to grab hold and start moving and going with it. I'm going to share some things about the federal and state that's coming down, none of which we know for sure. And I've talked to people and I've said, "All the balls are in the air and I'd like for one of them to just drop. I don't care which one at this point, just something happen."

As we are looking at the federal level, the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 is being re-authorized. This reauthorization is going to be in the form of consolidation with other programs. The funding will be in the form of a block grant. We don't know what kind of block grant. At this time the House is considering four block grants and the Senate is considering one or two. The end result, I believe, will be less federal regulation with more decisions left at the state and local agencies, which I believe will be good for us. The trade-off for that will be that we'll have less money to do the job. That will not be good for us.

The new legislation will call for coordination with the Goals 2000-Educate America Act, the School to Work Opportunities Act, and the Improving America's Schools Act. I think the call for coordination is extremely good. I think we've worked in isolation and it's time to stop that. The emphasis will be that vocational education programs will be providing the secondary education piece for students in an education and employment system. Our system is what is changing, and I think that is what we need to be looking at: What is the system that we are going to and what do we want it to look like? Rather than looking at the individual little pieces we have to fit together the puzzle that makes up the bigger system.

In this education and employment system, the system will include tech prep, youth apprenticeship, employment, initial employment, and two- and four-year postsecondary programs preparing for employment. In the federal requirements, we will have performance standards and measures to set a baseline of expectations and measure results. I think that's important to note.

This will encourage the improvement of programs which I believe is needed. However, money will also be needed in order to effect the improvements. Vocational students have always demonstrated what they know and can do and the integration of vocational education and other academic

education will assist all education areas on how to teach and learn with demonstrated results. Vocational education and vocational educators in these programs should step out and provide the leadership in how students best learn. I think we are not all doing that and we need to.

Looking at the state level, the legislature is in the process of making final decisions, as we sit here, for us for the next two years. I believe there will be an education and employment system as a part of the educational legislation and vocational education will be seen as needed for all students to be successful in this system. I think we will no longer talk about the vocational education students; we'll talk about all students that need vocational education. Vocational education must be connected to all other applied academic courses in the form of career clusters to help students see the relevance of education and developing skills to further education and employment. I also think that it needs to be in K through 12 and begin at an early age. We need career awareness. We need career exploration long before 8th and 9th grade. Local and state education and employment community partnerships will be essential in this legislation to determine the needs of local communities and to better prepare students to be successful in work and family.

I also see the relationship of the graduation standards to what we are doing. It will drive the need for various programs and vocational education will be in the standards with high expectations. We will need to look at vocational education concepts rather than the two words "vocational education." I hear people say, "Well, you're protecting your turf." I think we don't need to protect our turf; we need to protect our philosophy and our concepts of vocational education. If that's true, so be it, but as far as calling it vocational education, I think we need not be concerned about that.

In five to ten years, I believe there will be a renewed interest and an awakening to the needs of vocational technical skills and employment skills necessary for future employment. I think we are at the down part and we are going up. I hear people very concerned about the future employers of this country. I also believe that students will be better prepared to know how to work in many occupations—not just one, but many. The type of employment is going to be continually changing and the workforce will have to be prepared to change with it. I see Minnesota moving in that direction and hopefully, in two years, there will be major changes in that direction. It is important that education, business, industry, and the community join hands in this venture for the benefit of the students.

Some facts on Minnesota: Out of 397 school districts we have 354 districts receiving federal funds and participating in the Carl Perkins legislation and they participate through an application. Many school districts apply for funds and work together in a consortium; we have 50 applications doing that. In Minnesota, we have 322 districts receiving state vocational funds and we have 1,473 vocational programs with a full-time equivalent staff of 1,524 and students participating are 30,670. I give you those figures just because this is not a small group of people we're talking about, this is a large number of students that we care very much about and must see that their education prepares them for the world of work that they are going into.

I want to make one last comment. Because I've been a part of this Council and have been here, there is a need, I think, for the State Council on Vocational Education to work more closely with all vocational programs and partners and not work in isolation. When a project or research is being conducted, all parties should be brought together for planning the objectives and anticipated results. That is not to be critical, it is meant to be helpful. When we are talking about partnerships, and we do this as well, we forget sometimes to bring in all the parties necessary until towards the

end and then we say, "Oh, we really should have included you as well." I think that's going to be essential, as we go forth in this new changing vocational education, that we bring all the parties to the table and that we plan together and we are proactive together and promote vocational education for the benefit of all students in the state. Thank you very much.

## Scott Olson, Assistant Education Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Corrections

My name is Scott Olson. I am currently working for the Department of Corrections as the Assistant Education Coordinator. Prior to that, I worked for the State Board of Technical Colleges for twelve years. Prior to that, I was a Vo-Ag teacher, and I really appreciated the comment about the farm people before they were hired. That's one of the things that I wanted to talk about, because the three things that he [Warren Bradbury] cited about people with a farm background: The very first one was that they show up for work; that's an affective quality. When he was talking about what working on a farm qualified people to do, there were two affective and one technical qualities. The technical one was that they repaired machines, but it was the two affective [qualities] that really made the difference.

The same thing is true in the corrections system. We are still looking and trying to teach the affective side of vocational education, more so than the technical side. I don't really have any comments about the secondary vocational one. Our secondary program need is very limited in terms of vocational education. We have three institutions: Red Wing, Sauk Centre, and Thistledew. At this point in time, Sauk Centre is trying to establish a relationship with Alexandria Technical College, but that's about the extent of vocational programming as far as secondary. In the K–12, you asked about the current state of vocational education. In postsecondary in corrections, it is very good and it is getting better every single year. We have established within the last seven years very strong working relationships with the technical colleges. When you go up to Pine City [Technical College], they actually have one of their campuses over in the Willow River Correctional Facility and they also have a campus over at the Moose Lake Correctional Facility. As far as size is concerned, they are about 300 FYE [Full Year Equivalent], which, in fact, is what Pine City has at the main campus. We have eight vocational programs up there and things are going well. Every year we get better equipment. Every year we get better facilities. We have some real state-of-the-art facilities up there right now.

The same thing is true down in Stillwater which has a strong relationship with Northeast Metro. Every year it gets better. I was out there last week and looking at the CNC (computer numerical control) machinery they have. It's as good as anything on a campus at one of the technical colleges.

Northeast Metro [Technical College] also has a relationship with Oak Park Heights and is also just establishing one with Lino Lakes, bringing in our first vocational program over there, which is going to be a Cook-Chef program. When you go down south, we have a good relationship with Faribault [campus of Minnesota Riverland Technical College]—again it's about 300 FYEs—where the campus is actually on or in the [Faribault] correctional facility. We make that very important

distinction that Faribault [Minnesota Riverland] is not just offering those courses at the facility. It [postsecondary education at Faribault Correctional Facility] is actually part of the school [Minnesota Riverland]. When they get accredited by Northcentral Accrediting as a college institution, the correctional programs are included right in there and they have to meet the exact same standards as the rest of the institution. All of our teachers are licensed, just like they are in any other campus.

We also have a lot of vocational programming, postsecondary, that is not part of a technical college. For example, at St. Cloud we run 12 vocational programs with 14 different teachers. All of those programs have an advanced-standing agreement with another technical college someplace. For example, Minneapolis is the only place that has Barbering, so we have an advanced-standing agreement that all the technical education that the Barbering students take up at St. Cloud gets automatically transferred to the Minneapolis Technical College. We have that relationship with every single one of the programs. It varies with whom they're associated. For example, Meatcutting is associated with Dakota County, because it's where they have Meatcutting. Autobody is associated with Hennepin. It really varies out there, but I think, as far as vocational education, postsecondary level in the correctional system is concerned, if you take it in our system, you will get credit in the Minnesota technical college system some place. It is quite an improvement. It is going to get better. We are looking at the things that we are going to be doing with the technical colleges and we're very excited about it. We should be able to add quite a few FYEs to the technical college system.

You asked about the direction we in corrections see vocational education going? Ten years ago, there was a person over on the State Board of Technical Colleges staff named Dan Wagner. Dan said, at that time, when you look at the labor market, there are going to be two significant things that are going to happen within ten years. I really believe Dan has been born out. Where he used to see a labor market that was almost a bell-shaped curve, with high technical skills over here and low technical skills over here, what happened is somebody came in and pushed that curve down. Now we have a bi-modal distribution. We have a lot of low technical jobs over here, a lot of high technical jobs over here. Dan said one more thing: The tenure you are going to have within your job is going to get shorter and shorter and shorter. This has significant implications for what we are going to do. We are going to start moving our vocational programs, which have really stayed kind of in the center, either over here to the high tech side and make them better and better—I talked about machine shop; we've got to get into CNC and all this business—or train for low technical skill jobs.

The other thing that we have to do in correctional vocational education is to start preparing our students to go back to the educational opportunities wherever they are in the community, because their tenure in their job is not going to be long. They have to keep going and going and going and they have to be that way for the rest of their lives.

Another thing that I think is going to happen is, eventually, we are going have to get an AAS type of degree awarded through our vocational system. I know that we need it. Previous speakers talked about broad technical skills and broad knowledge. I think that's where we are going to be going also. We are going to be looking for general education, affective skills, and workplace skills. We are going to be looking for somebody that can go into an area, like business or machining, but in larger and broader areas. We are not going to see anymore shoe repairers. We are not going to see anymore welding courses. We are not going to see anymore bench electricians. I don't think those are going to be around in five or six years. It just isn't going to happen.

The second speaker before me, who left you with that definition of accountability, I'll leave you with mine. My definition of accountability is fear of failure. The more people are scared that they are going to fail—and this is primarily directed at the legislature, but it can also be directed at any one of the boards—the more accountability there is. So . . . fear of failure is it. Are there any questions?

**Rhoda Robinson**: Are people in the technical college classes completing before they are released from their incarceration?

**Scott Olson**: It is really low. There used to be a professor—he died recently: Gordon Swanson at the University of Minnesota—and he told me one time that the most valuable resource to you in an educational institution is the students' time. And, surprisingly, in a correctional system, our scarcest resource is the students' time. We've got to do something. We've looked at shorter programs. We've looked at having the programs at each one of the institutions. In corrections, you've got Oak Park Heights, which is a maximum, all the way down to Lino Lakes, which is getting to be a minimum. So they go through this whole chain. They transfer around between the institutions. We've been thinking about trying to have the same programs at each institution so they can transfer their courses, just like you would.

**Rhoda Robinson**: That doesn't seem efficient.

**Scott Olson**: It doesn't, but that might be the only way we can get it through. We are looking at Barbering at St. Cloud and Moose Lake. We've got that set up now. It's a little frustrating and that is another reason why we are going to go to broader areas with more general skills, trying to be make that more efficient, instead of trying to target in on things like Barbering.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Is there any move to assist them when they leave the correctional institution, like when they earn two quarters and need two more? Is there help to get them into St. Cloud State or something like that so that they can do that?

**Scott Olson**: Absolutely. One of the things that we do with the advanced-standing agreement is very carefully record all the work that the students have taken. We've got the process set up . . . like from St. Cloud. If you are going to go to Hennepin, you know where to go, you know how to do it, you have the correct papers in your hand before you walk in the door.

**Rhoda Robinson**: And do you have a support person to walk with you?

**Scott Olson**: Only at one place, and that's the most frustrating thing. We've only got it down at Faribault. You're right, that is very frustrating. When they come out of our facilities, they are so vulnerable for working in society. They need help. They need support. We have these big, burly kind of people that did really bad things and it's scary [that] they just can't survive in that society. They need help.

**Richard Lennes**: Scott, you really play by a whole different set of rules here. How are you intending to measure effectiveness? How well you are doing? Is it how long they stay out of prison or . . . ?

**Scott Olson**: Traditionally, we have looked at recidivism as the measure of whether we were

successful or not. In Minnesota, we have a remarkably low rate of recidivism. We are one of the best in the nation. I want to start looking at other effectiveness measures, because I'm a vocational educator. I believe that people go to school so they can go out and get a good job and make money and support a family. Just as I was leaving the State Board of Technical Colleges, they were establishing a relationship with the Department of Economic Security, trying to tap into their unemployment wage and tax information. We, over in corrections, are going to ride on the coattails of that. It's not enough just that they don't come back to prison. What we are really looking for is vocational education in our setting that allows them to make a living wage for themselves, a spouse, and two children, once they leave us. That's our goal. That's where we want to be. Simply coming back to prison, I don't think, is really going to be enough anymore.

## Lezlie Ingvalson, Specialist, Secondary Vocational Education, Minnesota Department of Education

Chair, members of the Council, thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify before you this afternoon. One of the nice things, I guess, about being last is I can say "Ditto, ditto, ditto," and save about three or four minutes.

There are a couple of things though that I would like to address specifically. There's been a lot of debate recently on the role that secondary voc ed should play in regard to the provision of occupational skill training for the students. We believe that secondary voc ed does have a major role in the provision of occupational skill training. I think everybody's in agreement that students need the soft skills in the secondary level—the SCANS skills, how to get along with others. But we feel the occupational training skills are also necessary for three reasons. First of all, even though research shows us that it is best for the students and for our economy if everybody would graduate and go on for further postsecondary education, we know that just doesn't happen. There are students that leave school and go directly into the workforce. If they have some type of skill training, it seems apparent or evident that they should have a little bit of a jump on the students that don't have the skill training.

Secondly, we see vocational education as the foundation for these new programs—some are not so new, maybe they are renamed, some are new—that are coming about—the apprenticeship program, the tech prep delivery system. In tech prep, the premise is that the student has the training at the secondary level. They should be far in advance by the time they get to postsecondary and be that much further ahead upon graduation.

Thirdly, you've heard several people address the fact that the number of voc ed programs have declined over the past few years. And my question is, is it a coincidence that the number of charter schools has increased? I talked with folks in a postsecondary options and alternative school programs and they told me that there are over 400 alternative sites delivering education to students. So obviously things are not working in our school systems, as is.

The second item that I would like to address is that of equal access [for special populations]. There's been a lot of discussion on using Perkins dollars to fund equal access for special populations. Just

as a reminder, the special populations that we are talking about are the students with disabilities, students identified as disadvantaged, limited English proficient students, gender equity types of programs, and then students in our correctional facilities. Our department is supporting that. Yes, equal access is still an important focus of Perkins. We've heard at the federal level that equal access will just happen. Women are making it now, and we don't need to address that any more, but we have seen a difference between promoting vocational education and when it wasn't promoted, and we are seeing more special populations in the vocational education programs.

At the secondary level, as the consortium and grant-writers submitted their applications, we gave them the directions that equal access does not mean anybody can come into this program. Equal access meant that you will recruit and you will give the information that students need to know about what will happen to them if they take this as far as what their job outlook is, what their employment, what the pay for each job will be. We've seen that that has benefitted. We've seen the number of young women in non-traditional programs increase. One of the questions was, "Is this being successful?" For state data, I can't tell you "Yes, of the number of persons that went into vocational programs, X number have been successful." But I can give you school districts that will tell you tremendous stories about students that have enrolled (whether they're disabled, disadvantaged, non-traditional), of the programs they took, and where they are now. For those students, it was a successful experience.

We can't emphasize enough that we still want to focus on the people access, meaning recruitment for special populations students in vocational education. However, in addition, Carl Perkins says special pops must be informed. We feel that all students need to be informed. There's about 12 things in the regulations that must be addressed: the knowledge of vocational programs, the outcomes, the employability, the chances that the students will have. We feel that all kids need to know that, not just the special populations. That was addressed this morning, too, in regard to high school counselors informing all students of these options, not just those of college level.

Those are the two points that I really wanted to focus on since most of the reform issues and everything else have been addressed.

**Rhoda Robinson**: Can I just add one thing. When you talked about voc ed, when you said that we need to teach the "soft skills" as well as the training skills, one thing that I have found in working with kids that supports that is this: Teaching soft skills, like how to get along with people and those kinds of things—you can't just teach people to get along, you've got to get along about something. That's the doing, the how to, and the kids function so much better when they have something to do to be cooperative about.

## Ed Bodey, Carpentry Instructor, Hennepin Technical College, Minnesota Federation of Teachers-Local 2209

I am a vocational teacher. I teach carpentry. I have taught at secondary and postsecondary. I am a benefactor of vocational education. My father died when I was 15-years-old. I was fortunate

enough to get 12 weeks of vocational training in the Navy Seabees and then I got three years in Vietnam to practice my skills. It was, for me, the difference between life and death. It gave me the opportunity to get started in life. You have to understand how important some of these things are. Programs we offer do this for students, but your first question intrigued me. Do we have a better system now than in the past? We do not.

Twenty years ago, when I started teaching, I taught at a cooperative center. There were 63 of them in the state. There are three left. I was appalled, disillusioned, and disgusted with the behavior of school boards and the self-interest of maintaining their own school districts. They sacrificed the futures of their own children over custodians', teachers', superintendents' jobs—the list goes on and on. These people argued about things, much like in a divorce, that were irrelevant. Nothing was too small to argue about. Vocational education can only succeed in a cooperative manner because of the cost of the equipment, the special facilities, and the specialized instructors that are needed. In the program I taught twenty years ago, the students built a three-bedroom house. They painted it; they drywalled it; they taped it; they plumbed it; they put the electrical in. They did everything. Today that program still exists. It's called vocational. It's a combination between cabinet-making and carpentry. They built a storage barn. That's 20 years later. So, there are vocational programs and there are vocational programs.

At Hennepin Tech, the students we have get a true vocational program and what they accomplish in that high school program transfers immediately through to the postsecondary programs they choose to attend. In my own personal experience—now this is self-referenced on internships—I have found more carpenters out in the field whose only training was as a secondary student in a vocational center. There are more of them out there than there are postsecondary graduates. Those are among the group, if you look at the ability of students, only 50 percent of our students have the ability to go on to higher ed. I have some figures and I have a document that I will be giving you. These figures show that the ability for students to get to employment now, right out of high school, is much less than it used to be.

The other reason we need to have secondary vocational education is to give these students an opportunity to see if they have some ability. A lot of them have interests in fields, but they need to get in and check that ability—to see if its real, to see if they have skills to go with it, if they have some natural ability that relates to their interest. I always tell them I wanted to be the quarterback for the Vikings. There's a reason I'm not. It wasn't lack of interest. It gives them a chance to check that out without taking any more of their time. It gets them started on a program. If they choose to come back, everything that they have completed carries through. We do need to get away from this idea of educational units having beginnings and ends. Education should be like life—seamless—it just continues on. But we have this illusion with school districts that the first thing that they look at is how many of their students went to college? They forget that 1 in 5 of them finish college. In the technical college in the postsecondary side, the average age of our students is 27 to 28 years old. I call them false starters. You know they are either coming back from college careers that had no outcomes or they got into jobs that were dead end jobs. They are the lucky ones. They are the ones that did come back. The unlucky are burdened with school burnout, financial burden from going to school, and family situations. They can't come back; they can't return.

The other issue that technology is creating in vocational education is we've gotten away from the origins of hand skills, tool skills, simple projects, a limited level of complication in the job. The new wave of successful vocational graduates have to solve a wider variety of problems because of the

introduction of more and more technology. So the need for academic skills has increased. The old vocational model put academic skills on the back burner.

We have students majoring in architecture come to us to take CAD because they can't draw on a computer. So they now have to acquire technical college skills to become employed with their college program. We are getting a linkage of the two together. American industry now is saying not "What do you know?" That used to be the situation in the '50s and '60s—what do you know? Now they want to know, "What do you know and what can you do right now?" Vocational education is providing that.

You're having individuals who have to solve more complex problems. They have to do problem-solving before they can get down to using those hand and tool skills. They have to know what to fix. We all have experienced that with our automobiles. The wave of technology has made us all fearful of buying a new computer. You know it's going to be out of date when you open the box. One of the things vocational education can't do is chase equipment. We got into a model 100 years ago where American industry said let schools do the training. We don't have the resources to. We never will. We can't chase equipment. The beginning is still the beginning, but we may have to go to a model where students are introduced at a secondary level to voc ed and then they go on to postsecondary, if that's possible. They may be able to exit after completing high school and get a job. I find that happens quite often. They have enough skills because they are getting in at entry level. They still need to be able to come back to school. This issue of lifelong learning is very important. But we may need to go to a model where you take some technical college training, you go out and work for a company for three to six months and then you return and get some additional training. This is lifelong learning. We are in a field where, in the past, the occupation outlived the worker. We're not outliving our occupations, so we have to come back and get retrained—constantly. It's not a matter of, "Well, I went to school 20 years go and I learned something and I've never had to go back again."

The high school students these days are a real problem, because vocational education is not part of the curriculum. It is not a required part of the curriculum. I personally believe, and it is not because I am a vocational educator but because I believe it would be good for students, that they all should be required to take some vocational education. The students that I get in my program come back to that technical college with a wide variety of feelings. They do not all come back to carpentry. Probably only 2 to 4 percent come back, but I see them a year or two later enrolled in electronic publishing, cook-chef, something else. They got that introduction. They got familiar with the school. They are comfortable with it. They come back. There are many pockets in the state where vocational education isn't available, not good quality vocational education. The secondary centers that we had 20 years ago—and I hate to say it was better back then, but I think it was—provided a mass of enough students that you could offer enough programs to bring these students together. A single school district can't offer auto mechanics, carpentry, machine shop, printing, but when you get districts pooling their resources, this can happen. It's a very hard thing for a school district to do. Only 3 out of 66 were able to do it and are still able to do it. I think it's very important that the focus in secondary be that it's continuous, that we need to look at an education system that is seamless, that there is not this beginning and end responsibility. The level of industrial education or vocational education has been raised by technology; there's no question about that. We can't serve some of the old populations we used to serve, because the occupations are just becoming too technical, with the equipment and machinery that's needed. Thank you.

# Letters and Other Testimony Submitted in Written Form

5418 Wyoming Street
Duluth, MN 55804
May 1, 1995

State Council of Vocational Technical Education
366 Jackson Street
Suite 314
St. Paul, MN 55101

Gentlemen:

It is my understanding that you are holding two meetings for people to express their concerns for Vocational Technical Education in Minnesota and one meeting is here in Duluth on May 2, 1995. It is also my understanding that there was NO information presented to the general public about these meetings and what little information was sent to educators, was sent in an almost belated style. Needless to say, I am just a little put out about not informing the public in a judicious manner so broad input could be given. I also understand that written input will be received and mine follows.

My entire career was dedicated to Vocational Technical Education starting from my junior high days, through high school and college. I taught voc ed for 17 years and supervised vocational programs for the Duluth system for the next 20 years. I even ran for the School Board in Duluth, and won, to continue my support for the vocational technical education programs that students need to succeed in this world. As I see it:

1. The trend towards voc training has been put in a state of suspension for the last three to four decades and the health of the nation reflects that suspension. My reference - in the forties and fifties, students were required to take two and a half years of industrial arts or home economics in junior high school and electives were available through the 12th grade. This no longer exists. When we talk about the need for students to APPLY what they learn, to GET ALONG with other students, to WORK in a cooperative manner, be GOOD CITIZENS and to just be prepared to enter the world upon graduation, there are NO programs like Industrial Arts, Home economics, Business and Office Practices, Distributive Education and a host of other vocational programs that will meet and exceed all these requirements. No other course of study has or can contribute the attributes described as students prepare to enter the work world. With the loss of these required subjects, students were forced into a college prep. program and for years that is all we heard, "you must go to college to succeed in life". From what I have heard and seen, the trend will be back to more of the courses I've described and students will be taking fewer required college entrance courses. Business, industry and the general public will demand that education prepare students for the work world and it isn't all in college.

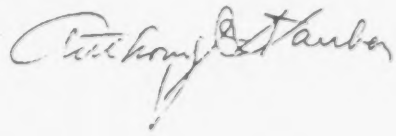
2. I believe I have pointed out the direction that voc tech education must take in the future and people like you must see that emphasis is again placed back on the student, what they really need to succeed in life as a father or mother and as an employee. They're not getting it now.

3. The emphasis, I repeat, must be to really prepare the student for the world, including such things as parenting. I remember some of the course content of Home Economics when I worked with the supervisor of those programs, and it included more on Family life and health as an integrated part of the course than anything that is now taught separately and if you examine graduating students today, it is obvious that whatever we are teaching in health, family life and all related programs for success, has not been the same in the past two decades, or longer, and it isn't getting better.

I believe the Council must become more active with the legislature in describing the need of students for the 21st century. Years ago all our voc programs were supported through Federal and State aids. Now, I understand that most, if not all aids are being reduced or eliminated. Sure, it costs more for the program I describe as special tools and materials are needed. Years ago I heard the school administrators crying that they should handle the money and all programs should be treated equally. That's like saying that a loaf of bread should cost the same as a pound of butter. Their cry was heard by our legislators as money was diverted, requirements dropped, excellent programs lost as too expensive and a mist of wonder swept over the State and Nation, a wonder of what went wrong and how could it be corrected. The nation at risk research in the early 80's had some good observations but a totally wrong approach to correcting the problems, that's why the problems are still with us today. Basics, reading, writing and computing are necessary but not more than good voc. tech. programs. Vocational technical programs must be reintroduced and must be funded at a level to meet the needs of the programs and not funded the same as every other program. I think our legislative body is giving us the big cop-out when they abrogate their responsibility in providing the direction and means for excellent education in Minnesota by saying we'll send the money to the districts and let them make the decisions. Or give the parent a voucher and let them decide what's best for their child. What uniformity can we have with almost 400 different districts making a decision on what's the best for their students, or millions of parents making the same decision?

Please make this a part of your report. Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,



Anthony Stauber

May 2, 1995

Minnesota State Council on Vocational Technical Education
Executive Board Room
Fitgar's Inn
600 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802

Dear Council Members:

Since I will be unable to attend the meeting today, I would very much like to submit my ideas to the council. My response to each of your seven questions follows:

1. Secondary vocational and technical education in Minnesota is struggling to survive because categorical aid funding is critical to program offerings. We have seen a reduction in program offerings in the Duluth Public Schools in recent years because state funding has not increased. My vision of secondary vocational education includes an increase in the use of computers and other technology. I believe that we will need to develop partnerships with business and industry to stay on the cutting edge. Programs for the "at risk" students should continue to play and important role in providing vocational direction.

2. Secondary vocational education programs should continue to include practical practices and processes with state of the art equipment. Partnerships with business and industry should happen both at the work site and in the classroom. The public needs to be informed when these partnerships are successful and the State Council should help with this media release. Vocational testing should be utilized to help each student focus on potential career options.

3. The new challenges of the postsecondary vocational and technical colleges should provide a better, more cost effective education for each and every student. I believe in the merger of the community colleges and technical colleges and I feel that we will see a rapid growth of students attending these facilities in the next five to ten years. I believe that all programs should require internships prior to graduation and each institution should provide upgrading training for people currently working.

4. I believe that postsecondary education institutions should be the basic providers of education prior to entry into the job market.

5. Articulation between secondary and postsecondary vocational programs is very important. We need to listen to the needs and desires of business and industry at both the secondary and postsecondary levels.

6. I believe that more special population students are being served at the secondary level; however, we need to do a better job of evaluating the effectiveness of all vocational programs after one, three, and five years.

7. I believe that our State Council should maintain both a state and global view with respect to policy analysis and research or evaluation of vocational and technical education in Minnesota.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my views with you.

Sincerely,

[*no signature, received as a facsimile*]

Al Chepelnik

## Submitted during testimony by Jim Arndt - May 2, 1995

Why Technical Education?

Competition for new businesses and industries is fierce. Just as the United States is in competition with other countries in the world marketplace, each state in this country is competing for new and expanding industries and economic growth. To be truly competitive, we must offer more.

There's always been a close connection between the educational level of the citizens of a community and its economic growth and development. The Technical Education programs provide students an opportunity to become part of a technically sophisticated workforce which can attract new industries and businesses.

A high school diploma is no longer the ticket to a good paying job. We need to consider the idea that a person's education should span at least 14 years - high school plus two years at a technical or community college and the commitment to lifelong learning.

The job market doesn't demand a great number of four-year college graduates. It does, however, demand employees who can solve technical problems and share ideas with others.

## Submitted during testimony by Jim Arndt - May 2, 1995

### Secondary Vocational/Technical Programs

Through a visioning process, long range planning enables educators the ability to present and enhance programs that are responsive to students and the community. We in Secondary Vocational/Technical Education need to develop new programs and enhance existing programs as a means of responding to student needs and the community due to technology shifts. A goal within the Secondary Vocational & Technical Education is to provide students a diversified educational choice that prepares all students for life long learning with a foundation in career technical education preparation.

Many of the ideas behind supporting Vocational/Technical Education within Duluth Public Schools is the continued opportunity to:

- develop interdisciplinary curricula geared toward real world skills
- technological retooling
- performance standards and alternative assessment
- implement innovative problem-solving
- project-based instruction
- enhanced technology utilization to improve technical skills of students
- continue the technical education process of actively engaging students in the learning process
- enable students to function in demanding environments within programs with high performance expectations
- train students to function in high-tech environments

Cetron and Gayle, in their 1991 book; entitled "Educational Renaissance: Our Schools at the Turn of the Century" clearly articulate some educational trends to which we should pay attention:

- only 15% of the jobs of the future will require a college diploma, but more that half of all jobs will require post-secondary education and training
- community colleges and technical institutes will become major determinants of technology growth in communities
- secondary students will come to value vocational education more highly as reform efforts bring about a restructuring of schools, especially in integration of academic and technical skills

In reality, work today doesn't require simply more or less of our traditional skills, but rather new and different skills (Berryman, 1990). So despite ten years of school reform we now, in 1992, have the greatest gap of any time in our nation's history between the skills young people possess when they leave school and the skills they need for employment (Liaison Bulletin, 1992). Employment Relations Today, 1992/93 stated; "President Clinton's major challenge will be to set the United States firmly on the path to high-skill, high-wage work in the twenty-first century."

Thus, through visioning, reform and program enhancement, Secondary Vocational/Technical Education will be recognized for its ability to respond to student and community needs.

Prepared by Jim Arndt

## Submitted during testimony by Jim Arndt - May 2, 1995

The education reform movement has performed an invaluable service in calling the nation's attention to the educational needs of non-college-bound students. It seems clear that shortcomings in the education of these students are the most serious problem in secondary education, one which substantially affects their performance relative to that of students in other countries and which contributes to the poor labor market outcomes of high school graduates. [1]

The goal of reform should be to create new systems of workforce preparation that will:

* Encompass all non-college-bound and some college-bound students

* Prepare students for careers rather than jobs.

* Broaden the curriculum framework from occupations to industries or other more inclusive constructs.

* Emphasize the development of cognitive skills, broad technical skills, and understanding of industries at the secondary level.

* Emphasize the use of applications to teach underlying principles (e.g., how electricity works) before teaching occupational procedures (e.g., steps in repairing an air conditioner).

* Use work experience, including jobs students find for themselves, to increase understanding of issues such as how the labor market functions and what skills and personal qualities the workplace requires.

* Prepare most students for some form of postsecondary education (e.g., two-year college, technical college, four year college) and additional training.

* Be competency-based; be geared to high, external standards; be assessed by valid, reliable methods; and lead to portable certification.

* Allow for other essential courses, such as core academics.

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[1] U.S. Department of Education, Final Report to Congress, Volume I, Summary and Recommendations. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1994.

Blue Ribbon School
1992-1993

# H U T C H I N S O N
## HIGH SCHOOL

A Recognized School of Excellence

Scott D. Douglas, Principal
William F. Driscoll, Activities Director
Daniel Van Overbeke, Administrative Assistant

May 16, 1995

State Council on Vocational Education
366 Jackson Street, Suite 314
St Paul MS 55101

To Whom it May Concern:

It is my understanding that the State Council on Vocational/Technical Education will be holding a public hearing on current and future status of vocational education in Minnesota on Wednesday, May 24, 1995. I am writing to request that the State Council continue their commitment to provide the maximum amount of Carl Perkins money to secondary schools as possible.

Whether purchasing equipment to serve a special need population in the vocational education program, hiring personnel to meet the special needs of vocational education students, providing vocational assessment batteries to students, providing an enhanced career education opportunity for non-college bound students in the secondary school setting or effectively surveying students regarding vocational interests and occupations it is essential that the Perkins Project Money continue its goal of obtaining a sixty to forty post secondary school fundraising split. This will allow high schools to continue the development of special programs to meet the special needs of students within the vocational education program. The expanded emphasis of secondary schools to prepare students for the work world creates an increased demand on equipment and personnel within the high school setting. Perkins funds will enable school systems to more effectively meet the needs of special population students within the vocational education program.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Douglas
High School Principal

SOUTHWEST/WEST CENTRAL
EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE SERVICE UNITS

Southwest State University
P.O. Box 1087
Marshall, MN 56258-0887
Phone: (507) 537-1481 V/TTY
(507) 537-7327 FAX

May 18 1995

Mr. Duane A. Rominger
State Council on Vocational Technical Education
366 Jackson Street, Suite 314
St. Paul. MN 55101

Dear Mr. Rominger

I'm sorry I am unable to attend the public hearing on vocational education being held on May 24th. However, I would like to make my feelings known and have them entered into the record.

I have been involved in secondary vocational education for the past nineteen years as a vocational administrator and Perkins Coordinator for several schools in southwest Minnesota. In that time many changes have taken place as schools wrestle with declining enrollment and limited funding.

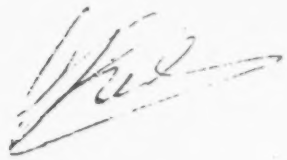
The one constant I have witnessed over the years is the commitment to secondary vocational education. This commitment stems from boards of education, parents, and the students themselves. I have seen schools plan any number of ways in which to maintain the vocational offerings available to their students. Not always are the plans successful and unfortunately several schools have had to reduce vocational program offerings. Nonetheless, vocational programs serve over 2,900 students in our schools with almost 50% falling into the special population grouping.

With these statements in mind, I would like to address point number 6 in your letter; specifically how the 1990 federal vocational education act (Perkins) has impacted the schools I serve. First of all, by improving the quality of instruction for special population students it has improved the quality of instruction for all students. This has been accomplished in tangible ways such as improving, modifying, and upgrading vocational curricula, identifying enrollment barriers, providing increased vocational assessment, developing transition strategies, and many other activities. Many intangible improvements have been made especially in the area of instructional sensitivity and

awareness. Secondly, by providing services that enable special population students to succeed, it has helped to ensure that all students enrolled in vocational programs will succeed.

The "fringe benefit" to all of this is that even though Perkins is designed to serve special population students in vocational programs, all students benefit when curriculum improvement takes place, when instructional improvement takes place, and when instructional awareness is increased. These good things will certainly continue if the Perkins program continues and secondary vocational education continues to receive its fair share of the entitlement.

Sincerely,



David Freiborg
Project Coordinator

LAMBERTON 633
507/752-7361
FAX 752-6133

SANBORN 638
507/648-3881

STORDEN/JEFFERS
507/445-3424 - 507/628-5521
FAX 445-3900 - FAX 628-5546

# Red Rock Central

RICHARD GULBRANSON, SUPERINTENDENT
FORREST BENZ, SECONDARY PRINCIPAL
NORMAN JOHNSON, ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
ROBERT MEYER, JR. HIGH PRINCIPAL & ACTIVITY DIRECTOR

May 15, 1995

State Council on Vocational Education
366 Jackson Street, Suite 314
St Paul MN 55101

Dear Council:

It has been brought to my attention that there will be a public meeting on Wednesday, May 24 concerning The Perkins Project.

My concern is that the funding of the project continue at the same rate or better because we are helping students in the technical areas where it is desperately needed. Secondary vocational education programs must be emphasized and improved, especially for special needs students. It is no secret that the technology age is only going to expand more rapidly as we enter the 21st century.

Please continue to support the funding as we know it. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Forrest Benz

Forrest Benz
Principal

FB:sh

79

# Sioux Valley-Round Lake-Brewster

Cooperated School Districts
445 Harrison Street Round Lake, Minnesota 56167-9799
Phone: 507-945-8123 Fax: 507-945-8124

Mr. George Loudenslager
Superintendent

Mr. Curt Busch
Secondary Principal

Mrs. Marcia Schumacher
Elementary Principal

May 23, 1995

State Council on Vocational Ed.
366 Jackson St., Suite 314
St. Paul MN 55101

Dear Madam or Sir,

I am writing to you in regards to the possibility of reducing Perkins money to secondary schools. In our school, Perkins dollars have aided our Agriculture and Home Economics Departments in a variety of ways. In both departments financing from Perkins money has contributed to: videos, reference materials, teaching aids, and hands-on visual aids being used with slower learners.

We hope that this financing will continue in the future for our school. In times of tight budgets this would be another setback to our facility for the services we try to offer to our students. Once again, I am writing this letter in support of Perkins money to continue to support secondary schools.

Sincerely,

Curt Busch

Curt Busch
Principal SV-RL-B Community Schools

STATE OF MINNESOTA

**MINNESOTA TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM**
State Board of Technical Colleges
Capitol Square Building, 550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: Minnesota State Council on Vocational Technical Education

FROM: Dr. Mary Jacquart

DATE: May 24, 1995

PHONE: 296-8028

SUBJECT: Future of Vocational Education in Minnesota

The basic philosophy and premises vocational and technical education in Minnesota have been built upon are emerging as a solid learning theory for other disciplines to model. As education reform moves forward, vocational technical education in Minnesota, I believe, is on the edge and teetering. . . .it can model and lead in the efforts of overall education reform and become strengthened by participating in the school-wide reform, or it can hold rigid in isolation and . . . .eventually fade away.

Secondly, vocational education in Minnesota must evolve with the system change taking shape and become an integrated component. Vocational education must keep focused skill building, career education and exploration in a collaborative setting with varied education, business/industry, and community partners. Efforts must continue in providing learners with smooth transitions between educational levels and the world of work. The report of the Education and Employment Transitions Council must be supported and acted upon if vocational technical education wishes to fulfill its mission of education for employment.

Vocational technical educators must take advantage of the higher education system merger July 1 of this year. Options and opportunities for students will be multiplied by the breadth of resources, expertise and collaborative opportunities provided by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, which will be the fifth largest educational system in our nation. As programs and college campuses get "fine tuned" over the next several years,

vocational technical education will emerge as reliable state resource which contributes positively to Minnesota's workforce and lifestyle and thus economic development and survival.

None of this will happen unless we continue to move in the direction of continued collaboration, especially as resources minimize. It is critical that vocational educators work openly with other systems and agencies to maximize the resources provided and work toward common goals. We can no longer duplicate efforts and fragment programs We have many demonstrated successes which can be strengthened through combined effort.

Thirdly, critical to Minnesota is the implementation of system reform to the urban area. Vocational education and school-to-work efforts need to be strong in our urban population if the Twin Cities is to maintain its viability. The disparity between the "haves" and "have nots" is becoming increasingly obvious and much work needs to be done to promote healthy living conditions for all, particularly for the youth of Minnesota whom are our future.

In summary, I believe that the State Council on Vocational Technical Education holds an important role in

1) Propelling education reform initiatives statewide and providing policy analysis on the impact of reform on vocational education, particularly in the area of school to work.
2) Attending to and promoting collaborative efforts between secondary and post-secondary (particularly the new merged higher education system), business/industry and community partners.
3) Advocating on behalf of Minnesota youth and their place in economic and workforce development, especially attending to the urgent needs of urban and metro area youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further clarification or comment. I look forward to working with the State Council in the future.

# Public Comments on Vocational Education in Minnesota
# State Council on Vocational Technical Education
# Public Forum - May 24, 1995

James R. Stone, III
Associate Professor,
Vocational-Technical Education,
University of Minnesota
624-1795

It is difficult to speak about vocational education absent an examination of what it means to educate the whole person. It is this separateness that has been an historic problem - and it is this vocabulary, this mental model that continues it. Part of what I propose is to eliminate that separateness. In the brief time I have here, I would like to propose a vision of vocational education for Minnesota.

As PREFACE to this vision, it is important to scan the environment, consider the world in which we live and the world into which our children will go. In this exercise, the condition of three societal institutions are worth comment: schools, workplaces, and the communities in which we all live. Briefly, the condition of

**secondary schools, may be described as:**

- a social experience for most adolescents. In my own research I have found that kids find school-work to be undemanding, uninteresting, and lacking in consequence.

- a mass production, factory model of interchangeable parts--largely organized for the convenience of adults. It doesn't matter when one takes English, or science, or history; nor does it matter who studies with whom. All of the parts are interchangeable.

In these schools:

- There are many good teachers of vocational subject matter. However, over the years the structural components of vocational programs - the direct connection to work and the community has become diminished
- Ironically, we find a lot of "vocational" education occurring, although not labeled as such - in the form of school-based enterprises, service learning, and innovative teaching strategies on the part of "academic" teachers.

The question for Vocational Education in the schools, is how to become relevant and a contributor to the education of all students - not a marginalized program for a few labeled kids.

**the workplace today may be characterized by**:

- massive dejobbing in the Corporate Sector (e.g.,),

| | |
|---|---|
| First Interstate Bank (LA) | 25% of its workforce (9,000 workers); |
| Union Carbide (CT) | 14,000 workers (22%) of its workforce; |
| GTE | 17,000 workers |
| NYNEX | 17,000 |
| Pacific Telesis | 10,000 |

Technological advances permit the production of goods and services absent human contributions (re: the Infinity plant in Japan). The demise of the production agricultural workforce is perhaps the model we face for all Production activities.

Further, in today's workplace we find

- a evolving splintering of the workforce into a highly skilled well paid minority and a low skilled, low paid majority
- average overtime is at record levels
- growth in underemployment - in hours worked and in skills utilized
- exponential growth of temp workers (Manpower is U.S.'s largest employer with 560,000 employees. 34 million Americans are temporary, contingent, contractual or freelancers[3]).
- insecurity about work and attendant stress
- the demise of the "social contract"

All the while, productivity is soaring, but not nearly as fast as the rise in CEO salaries and bonuses.

In a very real way, we are "back to the future." The labor market seems to resemble more the workplace of the 19th century prior to the rise of industrialization where people did work but did not have regular jobs as such.

Today's student will face tomorrow's workplace, a workplace where there is no "social contract," where there is no long-term employer commitment to employees, and where temporary work may be the norm.

The question for vocational education is what "skills" will be required to survive, if not prosper in this evolving work world? How should these skills be developed? Where

should they be learned and who should teach them?

**today's community may characterized by**:

- loss of a sense of community[4]
- rise in hard-core unemployable

The question for vocational education is how to ensure that the critical vocation of community member is not lost in a too narrow curriculum that does not see outside the school walls? And, how to reach the difficult to reach with sufficient preparation for successful transition to adulthood?

There is much work to do. Concerning vocational education specifically, let me propose three principles the Council should consider in its rethinking of vocational education.

PRINCIPLES

- Improving vocational education must be considered part of a total educational reform effort.
- Vocational education must be viewed as a life-long process - not a program or an event.
- Vocational education must connect to the lived reality of the adolescents and young adults it serves - the lived reality of their families, their neighborhoods, and their communities.

A FIVE/TEN YEAR VISION

What we now know as vocational education will be part of a comprehensive, holistic approach to preparing young people to be productive participants in our society. For some, it may mean an early introduction to specific skills training, for others it may provide an opportunity to explore work-life possibilities, for still others it may be preparation for continued education beyond high school. But for ALL, it will be part of their formal schooling experience.

Vocational educators will be part of cross-disciplinary instructional teams who work with cohorts of students for extended portions of the school day, for more than one year at a time. The focus of learning will be on real problems that have meaning to the learners and to their communities.

The community will be the primary source of learning and the laboratory for academic, social, and career development. The community becomes a vehicle for integrating academic and vocational education.

## A RESTRUCTURED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A re-invigorated Vocational Education must be:

- based on the emerging precepts of cognitive psychology.
- built around teamwork and group work.
- problem focussed. The problems (curriculum) will arise from the practice in broadly defined occupational clusters (e.g., health, law, business, construction, transportation, etc.).
- delivered through work-based and service-based experiences that will enhance the communities in which the students line as students develop.
- academically rigorous.
- seamless from early secondary schooling through college.

## A MODEL FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

Several years ago, employers in Boston, MA, working with community and school leaders created the Boston Compact. It was a novel way to describe a set of relationships designed to benefit the kids in Boston schools.

Minnesota needs a compact to insure the future of its young people. To coin a phrase, I propose a contract with our kids. The elders, our community leaders, our labor and business leaders, our school leaders, and our government leaders need to create a contract with our kids that says, if you work hard, learn, and contribute to your community, you will be afforded the opportunity to succeed as an adult. This Contract must ensure that school matters - that the work one does in schools has consequences and connections to world outside of school.

## A ROLE FOR THE STATE COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The SCVTE is in a unique position to bring together all of the players who could make a contract with our kids a reality. The model for this could be the framework proposed in last years state proposal for a School-to-Work Opportunities grant. This framework, modeled after the Employment and Transition Council, sought to create a seamless, statewide system of education and work transitions that was literally a pre-K through adult (lifetime) series of opportunities.

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1. Rifkin, J. (1995). *The End of Work* Tarcher-Putnam, New York.
2. Brady (1992). The breakdown of labor's social contract; historical reflections, future prospects. *Dissent* 39, 32-41.
3. *Training*, July 1993, 24-25.
4. Etzioni, A. (1988). *The Spirit of Community*

## STATE COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION
## PUBLIC FORUM QUESTIONS

### RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS 1-7
### EDWIN BODEY

I wish to provide you with a collection of fact, history and opinion. I am Edwin Bodey and I have been involved as an instructor of vocational education for 20 years. I received my vocational training in the United States Navy Seabee's. I used these skills and the GI bill to earn a BS Industrial Education from the University of Minnesota. I will also be completing my Industrial Education M Ed this Spring from the University of Minnesota. I have spent much of this time studying our vocational system.

We had a far better secondary vocational system in this state 20 years ago than we have today. Parents have always acknowledged that vocational education is wonderful exposure but do not want their child to be a part of it, unless it is absolutely necessary. Vocational education has always been looked upon as a second class form of education because of its past ability to provide training and work skills for a wide variety of individual natural abilities. Its origins of hard work, tool skills, repetition, and limited academic requirements trained for a workplace with a limited variety of problems. This workplace is vanishing. Technology has moved industry away from repetition and routine. Many students who might derive a greater benefit from a technology based vocational education are guided to more academic fields in the belief that greater opportunities lie in a college education. We need to rethink this idea. The need for greater access to vocational opportunities is well documented in materials such as Readiness for the Workplace produced by Northwestern National Life September 1994. This and other documents show the lack of connection between school and work. The United States is the only major industrial nation that lacks a formal system for helping youth make the transition from school to work. The facts are simple and clear.

- 50 percent of Americans do not or cannot pursue a college education.
- In the period 1990 - 2005 higher skilled occupations are expected to grow twice as fast as lower skilled occupations (Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- Most employers will not consider employing a high school graduate for anything except a low-paying unskilled job.
- In 1993, 25 percent of non-college bound high school graduates were still unemployed in October. This compares with 21 percent in 1980 and 16 percent in 1970.

I first thought of a secondary vocational center in Hutchinson, Minnesota. This was my first teaching job. This secondary center was one of 63 that operated in the state in the 1970's to early 1980's. These centers were a great idea and provided local communities with young people trained in much needed basic industria] skills. In my field carpentry I find many more carpenters whose only formal training took place in a secondary center, they far outnumber post secondary graduates you find in the field. The decline and loss of these secondary centers was caused by the following forces:

- Declining enrollments
- Hometown identities
- Preservation of local schools

These issues and others were real and imagined -- nothing was to small to fight about. It was amazing, appalling and disillusioning as a observer to watch local school boards sacrifice the well-being of the students, their own children, despite overwhelming evidence that to withdraw from the secondary center was not in the students' best interests. The school district involved Brownton, Coismos, Glenco, Hutchinson, Lester Prairie, Silver Lake, and Stewart; all have not re-established real vocational education today. This fight for vocational education goes on and on. I gave testimony last year at two senate hearings in regard to the sunset legislation that would have had serious implications for Minnesota's remaining secondary vocational education. I am including a brief portion of my testimony.

> *I have been a Vocational Educator for the past 20 years. I began teaching in 1975 at the Crow River Cooperative Center in Hutchinson, Minnesota. It was one of the 63 cooperative Secondary Vocational Education Centers operating throughout the State at the time.*
>
> *Today, in 1995, there are only three (3) of these centers still in operation. After the closing of the Crow River Cooperative Center in 1981, the Hutchinson School District tried alone to continue some of the programs but was unable to maintain their vocational quality. My old Crow River Cooperative Center program, Building Trades, is now a Cabinetmaking and Carpentry program that is more Industrial Arts than Vocational Education. Because of the lack of understanding of Vocational Education, it is often thought that if you have a vocationally certified instructor, you have a vocational program. This is not true; you need a specialized facility, specialized equipment, and adequate supplies.*
>
> *For example, in 1975 at the Crow River Cooperative Center, students built a complete three (3) bedroom home. Today, in 1994, the students build a storage building. Both programs are considered vocational.*
>
> *How have students benefited from this?*

*School districts have an obligation to provide students with educational opportunities that reflect the current state of technology and the changing nature of industry. The general shop classes that you and I participated in are now only the basic foundation and not the preparation for the needs of this State's industry.*

Over the past century, Industrial Education has been unable to define the limit of its discipline. The field has constantly expanded with the immutable introduction of new technologies in tools, materials, and industries. The introduction of new technology is inevitable and irreversible. The possessors and users of technology will flourish in our economy. This simple outline of the development of human technology only reinforces this reality:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Human evolution | -----to---- | 1 AD |
| 1 AD | -----to---- | 1750 All previous technology doubled (1750 years). |
| 1750 | -----to---- | 1900 Industrial revolution. All previous technology doubled (150 years) |
| 1900 | -----to---- | 1950 All previous technology doubled (50 years). |
| 1950 | -----to---- | 1960 All previous technology doubled (10 years). |

This technology development has almost eliminated industrial arts in the high school and transformed what is left from pre-vocational to avocational. It has created financial impossibilities for vocational education to keep pace with technology. In the late 1800's, the United States model for vocational education was a public education model. United States industry generally only provides training when it is absolutely necessary and then training is seldom beyond the immediate need. The model of American industry is to hire away someone else's trained employee. We need to rethink this 100 year old practice. For a short time, at the early part of the century, physical strength and the use of simple hand and power tools were the basics of many crafts and trades. The basic knowledge and skills needed to perform these trades were easily and inexpensively taught in the public schools. As higher levels of technology entered these crafts and trades, individual abilities and performance became more necessary for success.

The family farm and public school agricultural or industrial education was often the first introduction to tools and materials for students. Today the family farm is far removed from most students' experience; and the complexity of tasks and equipment needed to perform them, has placed the public schools in an inadequate position unable to keep up with even known industries. The basic auto, drafting, wood, and metal shops of our day can only produce hobbyists. As the usefulness of these basic skills declined in their ability to provide students with immediate vocational outcomes, the Industrial Arts were systematically eliminated from the curriculum.

Individuals who are to be successful in vocational education must be far more capable and resourceful than their predecessors. Vocational Education requires the addition of increasing academic skills along with the traditional mechanical abilities. We have reached a point where knowledge without vocational skills is of little value. Equally, vocational skills without increasing academic skills will not provide for long term adaptability. All education has become vocational education. Employers of today want knowledge with practical skills. The vocational link has been added to the knowledge link for employment preparation.

Most colleges and universities ignore the large number of college graduates who are under employed. Employment research is the individual's responsibility. Traditional degrees have become too static for the ever changing work environment. Vocational Education on the other hand has long been accountable for student placement, which has required close industry involvement using industry advisory committees. Education should be like life - seamless - from one stage to another. Instead, education has boundaries of responsibility that begin and end with little future accountability.

This begins with individual local school boards and school districts that still measure their level of success by the number of individual students who go on to college. Statistics show that only one in five students complete their college education in five years. The long term future of most high school students is not considered by these school districts. Their secondary concern after the percentage of college bound is the graduation rate. Vocational Education is well suited to provide many students, including college drop outs, with a promising future. Unfortunately, most are unable to re-enter vocational education because of acquired debt, personal issues, or educational burn out. The average age of the post secondary Technical College students is 28 years old. Many are returning false starters from the careers of under employment or college degrees with no outcome.

Vocational Education has long been thought of as a less than desirable alternative -- a second class education. These views have deep rooted origins that have long been forgotten. Many of these skilled trades and crafts remain very physical and are considered less desirable than occupations requiring only mental not physical effort. Along with this obvious observation is the forgotten origin of the labor force who performed these skills historically. The apprenticeships of Europe required seven to eleven years of indentured servitude, and many other crafts were performed by slaves. These forgotten origins have carried forward an unknown aura of undesirability that continues to exist today. Technology has raised the required entry level of abilities to perform these trades and many a college bound student might be better served by entry into Technical Education.

How do we overcome the negative stereotypes of the past and begin to show the positive future that Technical Education has to offer? I believe the scarcity of highly skilled and educated labor is creating higher wage levels that will offer attractive

alternatives to many semi-professions or middle management occupations. We may never be able to overcome the long held stereotypes of vocational education, but economic realities often bring us our best and most able students. Students no longer have access to the introduction to tools and materials that Industrial Arts, once provided and the historic entry point of many trades as un-skilled labor, has all but vanished, and most semi-skilled labor is also in decline. De-skilling or dumbing down of tasks is continuing so that there is a growing labor pool for low wage jobs; this will only drives these wages lower. In most cases industry is only providing skilled labor a living wage.

Respectfully submitted,

Edwin Bodey
11120 51st Ave. N
Plymouth, Minnesota 55442

# Epilogue

At its meeting on June 21, 1995, the Council spent some time discussing whether conclusions and recommendations should be added to this report. However, due to the sheer size of the report, even without the addition of conclusions and recommendations, and in the interest of allowing the public hearing testimony to stand on its own, the Council has decided not to add these features to this report. The conclusions and recommendations drawn from the public hearings should be evident in the Council's next biennial workplan, the attendant goals, and in future actions of the Council.

Allowing this report to stand on its own also allows other organizations with an interest in vocational technical education to use this document as a basis for discussion and planning in the same way that the Council will use it. The Council hopes that this document adds valuable information to any consideration of the current and future system of vocational technical education and job training in Minnesota.

# Appendix

## Public Forum Questions

1. From your perspective, what is the current state of vocational and technical education in the secondary schools of Minnesota?
   In recent years has there been a trend toward improvement or decline?
   In what direction do you believe secondary vocational education is heading?
   What should it look like in five or ten years?

2. What should be the emphasis of secondary vocational education programs in Minnesota?

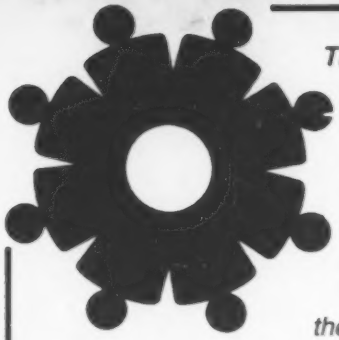
3. From your perspective, what is the current state of postsecondary vocational and technical education in Minnesota?
   In recent years has there been a trend toward improvement or decline?
   In what direction do you believe postsecondary vocational and technical education is heading?
   What should it look like in five or ten years?

4. Should postsecondary education institutions be the basic providers of vocational and technical education which prepares individuals to enter the job market?

5. What is the appropriate interaction among secondary vocational and technical education, postsecondary vocational and technical education, and various governmental and non-governmental employment and training organizations in developing a true education and employment transitions system in the state of Minnesota?

6. One goal of the 1990 federal vocational education act was to increase the participation of special populations in vocational education.
   Are more special population students being served by and succeeding in vocational and technical education?
   Why or why not?
   Should emphasis on providing access to special populations be continued as a federal focus?

7. What do you recommend as the future role of the State Council with respect to policy analysis, research, or evaluation of vocational and technical education among the agencies, organizations, or systems delivering this service in Minnesota?



*The logo of the State Council on Vocational Technical Education is an abstract representation of the citizen-councilors assembled at a round table. Designed by a commercial art student at Alexandria Technical College, the design was selected in 1982 from 69 entries submitted by vocational students in Minnesota's high schools, secondary cooperative centers, and technical colleges. The Council made its selection on the basis of a recommendation by a panel of representatives from the graphic arts, public relations, and media industries in Minnesota.*

## Purpose of the Council

The State Council on Vocational Technical Education is designed to further public-private collaboration for the advancement of quality vocational programs responsive to labor market needs. Established in 1969 and designated as a state agency in 1985, the Council comprises 13 members appointed by the Governor. Seven members represent the private sector interests of agriculture, business, industry, and labor. Six of the members represent vocational technical education institutions, career guidance and counseling organizations, special education, and targeted populations.

The Council advises the Governor, the State Board of Technical Colleges, the State Board of Education, the Governor's Job Training Council, the business community, the general public, and the U.S. Secretaries of Education and Labor. The Council advises on development of the annual state vocational plan; provides consultation on the establishment of program evaluation criteria and state technical committees; analyzes the spending distribution and the availability of vocational programs, services, and activities; reports on the extent to which equity to quality programs is provided targeted populations; recommends procedures to enhance public participation in vocational technical education; recommends improvements that emphasize business and labor concerns; evaluates the delivery systems assisted under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA); and advises on policies that the state should pursue to strengthen vocational technical education, as well as initiatives that the private sector could undertake to enhance program modernization.

To enhance effectiveness in gathering information, the Council holds at least one town meeting each year at which the public is encouraged to express its concern about vocational technical education in Minnesota. To enhance its effectiveness in providing information, the Council publishes a quarterly newsletter, an annual directory, and a biennial report. These publications as well as project and activity reports are available to the public.

Information on the date, time, and location of meetings and other activities is available by calling the Council Offices at 612/296-4202.

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**366 Jackson Street, Suite 314, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101**
**TEL: 612/296-4202 • FAX: 612/297-7786**

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